THE FABLES OF ESOP, IN ENGLISH.

VVith all his life and fortune, how he was subtill, wise, and borne in Greece, not far from Troy the great, in a Towne named *Amonio*. He was of all other men most deformed and euill shapen: for hee had a great Head, a large Visage, long Iawes, sharpe Eyes, a short Necke, crook-Backed, great Belly, great Legges, large feete. And yet that which was worse, he was dumbe, and could not speake. But notwithstanding this, he had a singular wit, and was very ingenious and subtill in cauillations, and pleasant in words, after he came to his speech.

WHEREVNTO IS ADDED THE Fables of *Auian*: and also the Fable of *Alphonce*, with the Fables of *Poge* the Florentine, very pleasant to bee read.

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This Historie maketh mention, how Esope excused himselfe before his Lord, for eating of the Figges.

And forasmuch as his Lord to whom Esop was bound, supposed that he was not profitable, he sent him to labour in the fields, and to digge and delue in the earth. And on a day, as his Lord walked in the fields, one of his labourers gathered figs, and presented them vnto him, saying, My Lord, take these Figs as for the first fruit of thy field. And the Lord receiued them ioyfully, and deliuered them to his seruant Agapotus, charging him to keepe them till he returned from his baine. And it hapned, that Esop comming from his labour, demanded his dinner, like as he was accustomed; and Agapotus which kept the figges ate of them, and said to one of his fellowes, If I did not doubt and feare my Master, I would eate all these figs. And his fellow said, if thou wilt let me eate with thee, I shall finde a craft that wee shall haue neyther blame ne harme therefore. How may that be, said Agapotus? To whom his fellow said, when my Lord shall come home, we will say to him, that Esop had eaten them. And because he cannot speake, he shall not excuse himselfe, and therefore he shall be well beaten: and hereupon they went and ate the figs betweene them both, saying, this villaine shall be well beaten. And when their Lord came home, he commanded Agapotus to bring him the figs: and Agapotus said vnto him, Sir, when Esop came from his labour from the field, he found the celler open, and went in without reason, and hath eate all the figges. And when the Lord

heard this, he was much angry, and said: call to mee Esop, to whom he said, thou counterfeit churle, how is this hapned, that thou hast not been afraid to eate my figges? whereof Esope was afraide, and beheld them that had accused him. And the Lord commanded to take off his clothes and let him be beaten, but he kneeled downe at the Lords feete, and by signes (because he could not speake) prayed his Lord to giue him space to excuse himself: his Lord granted it to him. And anon after, he tooke a vessell full of hot water, which was on the fire, and powred the same into a basen, and dranke thereof. And anon after he put his finger into his mouth, and cast vp all that was in his stomack, which was onely water, for that day he had tasted nothing but water: and he prayed that his accusers might semblably drinke of the water as he had done. And so they did, and held their hand before their mouth because they would not vomit. But because the water was hot, and their stomackes resolued by the water, they vomited vp the water, and the figges together. And when the Lord saw it, he said to them, Why haue ye lied to me against this Esop which cannot speake? and then he commanded to spoile them, and beate them openly, saying: Whosoeuer doth, or layeth wrong vpon other, shall be punished with the same paine that is due therefore. And these things seene & experimented, Esop returned againe to his labour. And as he laboured in the field, there came a priest named Isidis, which went toward the citie and had lost his way. And hee seeing Esop, prayed him that he would shew him the right way to the Citie. And Esop receiued him ioyfully, and made him to sit downe vnder a figge tree,

and

and set before him bread, hearbes, figges and Dates, and made signes to him to eate, and drew water of a pit, and gaue him to drinke. And when hee had well eaten, he tooke him by the hand, and set him in the right way for to goe to the Citie. After which things done, the Priest lift vp his hand to heauen, making his prayers to the gods for Esope, of whom he receiued so good refreshing.

How the Goddesse of Hospitalitie gaue speech of tongue to Esop, and how he was sold.

THen Esop returned to his labour, and after when he had wel laboured, for to eschew the great heate of the Sun (after this viage) he went into the shadow for to rest and sleepe vnder a tree. And when the Goddesse of Hospitality appeared vnto him, and gaue him Sapience and Abilitie, also she gaue to him the gift of speech, for to speake diuers fables and inuentions, as to him which was right deuout to hospitalitie. And after when Esop was awaked, he began to say to himselfe, I haue not onely slept and sweetly rested, but also I haue had a faire dreame, & without any impeachment, I speake, and all that I see I call by their proper names: as an horse, an oxe, a cheriot, and to all other things, I can giue to euery one his name. For I haue receiued suddenly the grace of this knowledge, for the great pitie that I haue had on them which lacked hospitalitie; for he that doth well, ought to haue good hope in God, that he shall haue good reward therefore, and therefore I shall not labour lesse then I did before. And thus whē Esop began to labour, there came he that had the charge of the feld, and the ouer-sight, & anon he be-

gan to beat one of the labourers grieuously, whereat Esop was greatly displeased, & said to him in this maner: Why beatest thou him for nought? and euery houre thou commest & beatest vs without any cause, thou killest vs and dost nought thy selfe. But I shall tell to my Lord all this matter like as thou shalt well know of it. And when the Procurator heard him called by his owne name Zenas, he maruelled that Esope spake, and thought in himselfe, I shall go before my Lord, to the end that this foule villaine complaine not of me, and that my Lord put not mee from my place. And he toke his mulet and rode vnto the city, & came to his Lord, and said, My Lord, I humbly salute you. And the Lord looked on him and said, why commest thou so afraid and troubled? And Zenas sayde vnto him, that now in the field is hapned a thing monstrous. What is that, said the Lord? haue the trees brought forth their fruite before the time, or haue the beasts brought forth their fruite against nature? And Zenas answered him: nay my Lord, but the crooked churle, the counterfeited Esop, beginneth to speake clearely. Truly said his Lord, this indeede is a thing that to me seemeth monstrous: yea forsooth said Zenas. Then said the Lord, we see daily many men when they bee angry cannot speake, but when they bee in peace, can well speake, and proffer things. And then Zenas said, my Lord, hee can speake aboue all other, & hath said to mee things contumelious, blasphemous, and villainous, of thee and all thy goods. Whereat his Lord was very angry, and said, Goe thou to the field, and what thou wilt doe with him, doe it, sell him, or giue him, or loose him, for I giue him to thee. And then

Zenas

Zenas tooke his gift by writing, and came againe into the field, and said to Esop, now thou art mine, and in my power, for my Lord hath giuen thee to mee, and because thou art a villaine and an euill churle, I shall sell thee vtterly. And then it fortuned that a Merchant that had bought seruants, came into the field to buy beasts, for to beare ouer his merchandize to Ephesus, the which met with Zenas, and he saluted him, and demanded of him if he had any beasts to sell. And Zenas answered, that for nothing he should find no beasts to sell, but I haue a seruant which is not faire, and he is of a good age, which if thou wilt thou shalt buy. And the Merchant said, hee would first see him. And then Zenas called Esop and shewed him to the Merchant. And when the Merchant saw him so foule and deformed, he said in this manner: From whence is this villaine come, and this trumpet of Trageteutus? this is a faire merchandize, for if he had not a voyce, I should take him for a bottle full of wind: yee bee well occupied to bring me hither to shew me this faire personage, I supposed thou wouldest haue sold to mee a comely seruant, honest and pleasant. And then the Merchant returned on his way, & Esop followed him, saying in this manner, Abide a little here, and the merchant said, hinder me not villaine, for thou maiest haue no profit of me: for if I bought thee, I should be called the Merchant of fooles, and of vaine things. And then Esope said vnto him, Wherefore art thou then come hither? and the Merchant answered him, to buy some thing that is faire and comely, but thou art foule, deformed, lothsome, and counterfaited: Wherefore I meane to haue no whit at all to doe

with such merchandize. And then Esope said, if thou wilt buy me, thou shalt lese nothing. And the Merchant demanded wherein maiest thou doe me any profit? Then Esope said: Be there not in thy house litle children, ne in the towne, that cry and runne? buy mee and thou shalt doe wisely, and shalt be their Maister, for they shall dread & feare me like a false visage. And then the Merchant smiled at the words of Esope, and returned back to Zenas, asking him how he would sel that faire merchandize. Zenas said vnto him, giue me thirty pound or three halfe pence for him: for I wot well that no man will buy him: and then ỹ Merchant payd for him as much as he was well content with, and Esop went with his Maister into his country. And as he entred into the house he saw two children lying in the lap of their mother: then said Esop to the Merchant, Now shalt thou haue experience of that I haue promised, for since these two little children haue seene me, they haue been still and afeard. And then the Merchant laughing, bad him to enter, and he seing his fellowes faire and pleasant, saluted them saying: I salute you my faire fellowes. Now when they sawe Esope they saide all, wee shall haue anon a faire personage, what will our Maister doe to buy such a man, so foule & so deformed? And their Lord answered, because that I haue found no beasts to helpe you, therefore I haue bought this gallant, to helpe you to beare your carriage, wherefore depart among you the fardles for to beare. And Esop said to them, O my good fellowes, ye see well that I am the least and feeblest, I pray you therefore to giue me the lightest burthen: and his fellowes said to him, because thou maiest beare nothing:

To

To whom Esop said, because ye doe all the labour, it is not meete that I onely should be idle, and vnprofitable to my Lord.

How Esop demaunded the lighter burthen, but to the seeming he tooke the heauiest, which was at last the lightest, and so he beguiled his fellowes.

THen his fellowes said to him thus, which wilt thou beare? And Esop beholding al the burthens, fardles, packs, and paniers, tooke a panier full of bread, which two of the beaters were ready to haue borne. and said: let me haue this panier to beare. Then they said he was the most foole of thē, because he might haue chosen the lightest, and took the heauiest. But he tooke the panier of bread, and went forth before al his fellowes: which when his fellowes beheld and saw, they all said that their master had not lost his money, for hee was strong, and might beare yet a heauier burthen; & thus they mocked him, but alwaies Esop was at his lodging before his fellows. And when they were arriued at their lodging, their master made them to rest, & commanded Esop to bring forth bread to eate, and so he tooke bread out of his panier that his panier was halfe empty. And when they had well eaten, each of them tooke his burthen, and Esope bore lesse then he did, and came to his lodging before his fellowes, and at supper he gaue so much bread, that his panier was all empty. And on the next day he tooke his panier, and went so fast before his fellowes that they knew him not, so that one demanded, Who is he that goeth so farre before vs? and another said,

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it is the croke-backed and counterfaited Churle, which by his subtilty hath deceiued vs that beare the burthens not consumed by the way, but he hath auoided his burthen, & is more wily then we be. And when they came to Ephesus, the Merchant led his merchandize to the market, and also his three seruants to sell, which were named Garmaticus, Saltis, and Esope: & a merchant said to him, if thou wilt sel thy seruants at a reasonable price, there is a Philosopher named Exantus, to whom much people goeth to learne at a place called Somnon, leade thy seruants thither, and the philosopher will buy them: and the merchant did well aray Garmaticus & Saltis with new robes, and led them thither for to sell: but because Esop was so foule & lothsome, he was clad in canuas, and was set betweene the other two which were faire, pleasant, and well fauoured men; but all they that beheld Esop, were abashed because of his deformity, saying: From whence commeth this fellow? And because they so wondred at him, he looked all ouerthwartly on them boldly.

Of the second sale of Esope.

AND when the market day came, Exantus the Philosopher departed out of his house, and went to and fro throughout the market, and he saw these two yong men, and Esope standing betweene them, whereat he maruels greatly for what cause the merchant had so sorted them; and approaching to one of them, he said in this manner, Of what country art thou? and he answered, I am of Cappadoce. And Exantus demaunded of him, saying: what canst thou doe? And hee answered, I can doe all things that thou wilt: which answere when Esope heard, hee laughed,

laughed, ſhewing his great teeth: and all the ſchollers that were there with Exantus beholding Eſop ſo ſore laughing, and ſhewing his great teeth, they thought they ſaw a monſter and not a man, and ſaid to their fellowes, this great whoreſon hath very big teeth. And ſome asked what they had ſeene, and they ſaid, that he ſore laughed, and ſhewed them his teeth, and ſome ſaid hee laughed not, but that hee was a cold on his teeth: and one of them demanded wherefore he laughed, calling him gentle gallant: and he ſaid, what haſt thou to doe therewith knaue? goe thy way: and that ſcholler departed all aſhamed, following his Maſter. And then Exantus demanded the price of Saltis: & the Merchant ſaid that he ſhould pay for him a thouſand pence: and Exantus eſteeming the price ouer deare, returned to the other fellow, and ſaid to him, Of whence art thou? and he ſaid, of Lido; and Exantus asked of him: what canſt thou doe? and he ſaid, I can do all that thou wœneſt: and when Eſop heard theſe words, hee laughed more then he did before. And when the ſchollers ſaw him laugh againe, they ſaid: this fellow laugheth at all things. Then Exantus demanded the price of Garmaticus, and the Merchant ſaid three M. crownes, which Exantus thought too deare, & went his way. Then the ſchollers ſaid to their Maſter, Theſe ſeruants pleaſe thée not. yes ſaid Exantus: they pleaſe mée well, but it is ordained in our City, that no ſeruant ſhould be bought at ſo high a price, vpon a great paine. And one of the ſchollers ſaid: ſeeing they that be faire cannot be bought, buy him that is foule and deformed, truely he ſhall doe thée ſome ſeruice, and the price that he ſhall be ſold for, wee our ſelues will pay.

And

And Exantus said to them, If I should buy this villaine that is so foule and vncleane, my wife would not be well pleased, for she is so curious, that she may not suffer her selfe to be serued of such a counterfeited seruant. And then the schollees said, Master thou doost many things, with which thy wife shall not gainesay nor meddle, Then Exantus said to them, Let vs then demand of him what he can doe, lest for default of asking we should lose our money. Then Exantus turned him to Esop and said, God saue thee yong man: and Esop said to him in this manner, I pray thee grieue me not. Then Exantus said to Esop, I salute you. So do I thee said Esop. Well, leaue these mocks said Exantus, and answer me that I shall demaund: and hee asked, what art thou? and Esop answered, I am of flesh and bone. Then Exantus said, I demand not that, but where wast thou borne? and Esop answered, In the wombe of my mother: and Exantus said, yet I aske not that of thee, but I aske of thee in what place thou wert borne? and Esop said, my Mother neuer told nor assured mee, whether shee was deliuered of mee in the chamber or in the hall. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell me what thou canst doe? Esope said nothing. Exantus saide: What canst thou doe nothing? Esope said, no. Wherefore, said Exantus? Because said Esope, my fellowes say they can doe all things, and then will they leaue nothing for me to doe. Then the schollers were much abashed, and had great maruell at him, saying: This fellow answereth by diuine wisedome, for there is none to be found that can do all things, and therefore he laughed. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell mee if thou wilt

that

that I shall buy thee: and Esope said, What is in thee, no man shall constraine thee thereto: nevertheless, if thou wilt buy me, open thy purse, and tell the money, and make the bargaine. Then the Schollers sware by all the gods, this fellow exceedeth our Master. Then Exantus said to him in this manner, If I buy thee, wilt thou not runne away? Then Esop answered, If thou thinke that I will runne away, I counsel thee not to buy me. Surely, said Exantus, thou saiest well, but thou art very lothsome and deformed. To whom Esope said, Men ought not onely to behold the face of a man, but rather to regard the courage. Then Exantus demanded of the merchant, what shall I pay for this Esop? And the merchant said to him, thou art a foolish merchant, to leave these faire and goodly seruants, and to take him that can doe nothing, take one of these two, and let this Asse goe: and Exantus said, I require thee to tell me what I shall pay. Then the merchant said three score pence. Then the Schollers told out the money to the merchant, and thus by this bargaine, Esope became seruant vnto Exantus. And when the banquers received the money for the sale of Esope, they demanded curiously who were the buyer and seller. Then Exantus and the merchant compounded and accorded betweene them, that hee had not bin sold for so much money. But Esop said to the Banquers, this is he that hath bought mee, and this is he that hath sold mee, which thing they will deny, wherefore I affirme and say, that I am free. Then the Banquers laughed at this cauillation, and went and received the price of Exantus, for as much as he had bought Esope.

How

How Exantus brought Esope home to his wife.

Then when euery man was departed, Esope followed Exantus home to his house, and when hee came before his house, he said to Esope, abide heere awhile before the gate, vntill I goe in for to praise thee to my Lady and Mistresse my wife. Well sir, said Esope: and then Exantus entred into his house, and said to his wife, Dame ye shall no more haue cause to be at debate with me, for ye haue desired me long for to get you a faire seruant, wherefore now I haue bought one that is so wise, and so pleasant, that thou neuer sawest one better. And when two of the Ladies seruants heard him say so, weening that it had bin truth, they began to striue together, & the one began to say to the other, My Lord hath bought for me a faire husband: and the other said: This night haue I dreamed that I was married: and thus his seruants talked. But his wife said, my Lord, where is the faire fellow that yee praise so much? I pray you let me see him: and Exantus said, he is before the Gate. And his wife said, I pray you bring him in: and as the two yong women had debate for him, one of them thought in her selfe, I shall see him first, and if I may, hee shall be my Husband, and so she issued out of the house, and said: where is this faire yong man that I desire to see: and Esope said to her, what demandest thou? I am heere. And when she saw Esop, shee was abashed, and said vnto him, Art thou the faire Peacocke? where is thy tayle? And Esope said to her againe, If thou haue

haue néede of a taile, thou ſhalt not faile of one. And then as he would haue gone in, the ſeruant ſaid vnto him, come not héere; for all that ſhall ſee thée will runne away. And after ſhe went in, and told her fellow what he was: and when ſhe came out, and ſaw him ſo deformed, ſhe ſaid, beware thou knaue that thou touch me not: and when Eſope entred into the houſe, anon he was preſented to the Lady: and when the Lady ſaw him, anon ſhe turned to Exantus and ſaid: in ſtead of a ſeruant thou haſt bought a Monſter, throw him out: and Exantus ſaid to her, My wife, thou oughteſt to be glad and ioyful, becauſe I haue brought to thée ſo faire and ſo good a ſeruant: and ſhe ſaid to Exantus; Now wot I well that thou loueſt me not, for thou deſireſt to haue another wife, and becauſe thou durſt not tell it mee, thou haſt bought mée this foule great knaue, to the intent that I goe from thée: I will no longer abide, for thou knoweſt wel that I may not ſuffer him, and therefore deliuer me my dowrie, and I ſhal go my way. And thé Exantus ſaid to Eſop, when we were on the way thou ſpakeſt largely, & now thou ſaieſt nothing: and Eſop ſaid to him, becauſe thy wife is ſo malicious, put her in priſon. Exantus ſaid, Hold thy peace, elſe ſhalt thou be beaten, ſeeſt thou not that I loue her more then my ſelfe? then ſaid Eſop, I pray thee that thou loue her well: and ſhee ſaid, wherefore not? Then Eſop ſmote his foote on the pauement, and cryed out with a loude voyce, ſaying: Harke, this Philoſopher Exantus is ouercome of a woman: and then Eſop turned him to his Lady, and ſaid to her: Madame, I pray you take not my words at the worſt. Thou wouldeſt haue a ſeruant that were yong,

well

well formed, well arrayed, strong and rich, to serue thée at thy dinner and beare thee to thy bed, that can rubbe and claw thy feete, and not such a foule man and so deformed a seruant as I am: for if thou hadst such a one, thou wouldest set nought by thy husband, & therefore Erupus the Philosopher had his mouth of God, which neuer lyed. Hee said that there were many perils and torments on the Sea, and other great riuers, and also pouerty is a hard thing, & difficult to be borne: and also there be many other great dangers, and troubles infinite: but there is no worse danger nor peril then a false woman. And therefore Madame, I pray you that you take no more a faire seruant nor pleasant to serue thée, lest therby thou dishonor thy Lord and husband. Thé she said to Esop, auoide hence thou villaine, which art not onely deformed of thy body, but also of thy words: but I shall go my way. Then said Exantus to Esope, Thou seest how thou hast angred my Wife, see thou please her; and Esop said; it is no small thing to please the ire of a woman, but a great thing. Exantus sayd to Esop, speake no more, for I haue bought thée to make peace, and not to make debate and strife.

How Exantus brought Esope into a garden.

EXantus bad Esop take a pannier, and follow him into the Garden. And Exantus said to the Gardiner, Giue vs of thy hearbes: and the gardiner cut off the hearbs in diuers places, and deliuered them to Esope, and he tooke them, and Exantus payed for them: and when he was departing, the gardiner saide to him, Master, I pray thee that thou wilt assoile mee a question: Well, said Exantus, aske what thou wilt: and the Gardiner demanded of him, saying:

ing; Master, what is the cause that the hearbs that be not laboured, grow faster and sooner, than they that be curiously laboured? This question answered Exantus, that they came by some prouidence by which the things were brought forth. When Esop heard this answer, he began to laugh. And Exantus said to him; Thou villaine, laugheſt thou mee to scorne? and Esop said. I mocke thee not, but him that hath learnd thee thy Philosophy, what solution hast thou made? What is that that cōmeth of Diuine Prouidence? A childe of the kitchen will make as good an answer. Exantus then said to Esop, make thou then a better solution. Esop sayd vnto him, If thou command me, I shall gladly. Exantus sayd vnto him; It appertaineth not to him that iudgeth things of difficulty, to iudge rude things and rusticall, but I haue a seruant here which shall informe and giue the solution of thy question, if thou wilt request him. And the gardner replyed. Can this villaine palliard that is so greatly deformed, answer to this question? Then the Gardner said to Esop, hast thou knowledge of such things? And Esop said; Yea truely, more then all the men in the world. For thou requireſt wherefore the hearbs that bee not laboured, grow sooner than they that be sowne and laboured? Esop replyed, Take heed to my answer: for as a woman that hath bin a widow, and hath had children by her first husband that is dead, and after was married to another man, which hath had children of another Wife before: and vnto the children of her first husband, she is a mother, & to the other children, she is but a step-mother. Thus there is a difference betweene her owne children, and that

other womans. For her children ſhe hath nouriſhed peaceably, and the other children in anger & wrath. In this manner it is of the earth; for ſhe is mother of the hearbs that grow without labour, and is but ſtep-mother to the hearbes that doe grow by labour and force. Said the Gardiner then, thou haſt eaſd mee of much ſtudy; therefore I pray thee take of the herbs that be in my garden at all times, and when you liſt.

How Eſope did beare the Preſent.

ON a time, when the ſchollers had been in the auditory with Exantus, one of the ſchollers dreſt precious meats for the ſupper of Exantus and other: and when they were at ſupper, Exantus tooke of the beſt meats, and put them in a platter, and ſayd to Eſope, Go beare this to her that loues me beſt. And Eſope thought in himſelfe; Now is it time to auenge me beſt on my Miſtris. And when he came home into the Hall, he ſaid vnto his Miſtris: Madame, beware that ye eate not oft his meate. And his Lady ſayd, I wot well alwaies that thou art a great foole. Eſope ſaid to her, Exantus hath not commanded me to giue it to thee, but to her that loueth him beſt.

Then Eſope preſented the platter to a litle hound, which was alwayes in the houſe, ſaying to her: My Lord hath ſent to thee this precious meate Then the wife of Exantus went into her chamber, and began to weepe. And Eſope returned to Exantus, and hee aſked him, how his lone fared: he ſaid, Right well; and all the meate that I haue ſet before her, ſhe hath eaten it. And Exantus ſayd, what ſaid ſhe: and hee ſaid, My Lord, ſhe ſayth nothing, but ſhe deſireth to ſee thee. When they had well eaten and dronke, one aſked

asked when mortall men shall haue most to doe? Esop said that shall be at the day of iudgement. The schollers hearing this, said: this villaine is full of answers, and nothing said, Why goeth the sheepe to his death following his maker, and saying nothing, and when the swine is brought to be slaine, he doth both cry and bray? And Esop answered and said: because it is accustomed to milke and sheare sheepe, and he weeneth that he shall bee foorthwith either milked or shorne, and therefore feareth not at all: But because the swine is not accustomed to be milked or shorne, but to be letten blood and to lose his life, therefore he dreadeth when he is taken. And all the schollers said it is troth: Loe this man is wise, and hath said well. Then each man arose and went his way.

And when Exantus was returned home to his house, he entred into his chamber, and found his wife sore weeping, and bee said vnto her: my sweet lone, how is it with you? and kissed her, and shee turned her backe to him, and said, let me alone, I haue not to doe with thee, I will goe from thee for thou louest better thy hound then me, to whom thou hast sent thy precious meate. And because he knew nothing thereof, he demanded, what meate hath Esope brought to thee: And shee said, none at all. Exantus said, I am not drunke, I sent to thee by Esope a platter full of precious meate, and she said: not to me, but to thy hound. Then he called Esop and demanded of him to whom hast thou giuen the meate I deliuered to thee: and he said, to her that loueth thee best, like as thou commandest me. And Exantus said to his wife, vnderstandest thou not what he saith? I vnderstand

him well, said she, but he gaue to mee nothing, but gaue it to thy hound. Then Exantus turned to Esop and said to him: thou great villaine, to whom hast thou borne the meate I deliuered to thee? Esope answered, to her that loueth thee best. And Exantus demandeth who was she? And Esop called the little hound, and said: this is she; for the loue of thy wife is right nought, for if she be a little angry, incontinent she reproueth thee, & speaketh violently to thé that louest her, and will say, I will goe from thee and leaue thy house: & if this hound go from thee, call her againe and she commeth anon, making thee cheere, and therfore thou oughtest to say, to thy wife, and not to her that loueth thee best. Then Exantus said to his wife, thou seest this fellow is a railer and an inuenter of words and therefore haue patience, for I shall finde cause to auenge thee, and beate him. And she said, do what thou wilt, for I shall neuer haue more to doe with him, and after that thy hound, for I go my way: and without saying farewell, she went home to her friends. And Exantus was angry & sorrowfull for her departing: and Esop said to him, Now seest thou well that thy wife that is gone loueth thée not, but this little hound abideth by thee. Exantus all heauy for his wiues departing, prayed her to returne, but it auayled not: for the more a woman is prayed, the more is she obstinate, and will do the contrary.

How Esop made his Lady to come home againe.

AND because Exantus was angry for the departing of his wife, Esope said to him, Maister, bee not

not angry, for without praying I shall make her returne, and come again unbidden. So that they shal be more lowely, meeke, and obedient to your commandements, then euer she was before. And then Esop went to the market, and bought capons and many other pullen, and as hee bare them passing by the house where his mistresse was, it happened that one of the seruants of the house came out. And Esop demanded of him. Haue ye sent nothing to the wedding of my Lord? To what wedding said the seruant? Unto the wedding of Exantus said Esop, for to morrow he shall wed a wife. And anon the seruant went into the house & said to Exantus wife: Madam there be new tidings. What be they said she? Exantus shall haue a wife and be married, & forthwith incontinent she departed and came home to the house of Exantus crying: Now know I well the troth, & wherefore thou madest this great villaine to anger me, because thou wouldest take another wife, but I shall keepe thee well therefore, for as long as I liue shall neuer woman come here: Exantus be thou sure. Then was Exantus ioyfull for to haue againe his wife, and gaue Esop great thanks.

How Exantus sent Esope to the market, to buy the best meate he could get, and how he bought nothing but tongues.

And a little while after, Exantus had his scholers to dinner with him, and saide vnto Esope goe anon to the market, and buy vs of the best meat thou canst finde. And Esope went to the market and thought in himselfe, now shall I shew that I am no foole, but wise. And when Esope came to the market,

hee bought the tongues of Swine and Oxen, and dight them with Vineger, and set them on the table. and the Schollers said to Exantus, Thy dinner is full of Philosophy. And Exantus said to Esop, bring vs our meate, and Esop brought them more tongues, arraied in another manner, that is to wit, with Garlick and Onions. Then said the schollers, these tongues be wel drest, for, one differeth from another, and Exantus bad Esop bring other meate, and Esop brought yet forth tongues. Then were the schollers angry, & said: wilt thou alwaies giue vs tongues? And Exantus all angry in this courage, said to Esop, what other meate hast thou ordained for vs? and Esop said none other. Then Exantus said to Esop, thou great headed villaine, said I not to thee that thou shouldest buy of the best meat that thou couldest find? so haue I, said Esop, and thanked be God that here is a Philosopher, for I would faine know of the Philosopher what is better then a tongue: for certenly, all Art, all doctrine, & all Philosophy, be notified by the tongue, without ꝑ which there could be no ioy or cõpany among men for by it the lawes are declared, by it the good receiue praise, the euill rebukes, the sorrowfull comfort, the foolish instruction, the wise men knowledge, and finally, the greatest part of the life of mortall men is in the tongue, and therefore there is nothing better than the tongue, nor nothing more profitable vnto men. Then sayd the Schollers, thou doest wrong to bee angry, for Esop sayth right well. And after all these words, they arose from the Table, and on the morrow after Exantus excusing himselfe in their course fare, desired them to come againe to supper, and they

should

should haue other fare. And Exantus said to Esop in the presence of them that were there, Goe to the market, & buy the worse meate that thou canst finde, for all my friends shall sup heere with mee. So Esop without troubling of himselfe, went into the butchery and bought againe tongues, & dight them as he did before, and when they came to supper, he serued them with tongues as he did before. And the schollers said, We we come againe to the tongues? And because the schollers were not pleased, Exantus said to Esop, thou art a great headed villaine, said I not to thee thou shouldest buy the worst meat that thou couldst find? So haue I done said Esop, for what is worse or more venimous then an euill tongue? By the tongue men perish, by the tongue they fall into poverty, by the tongues cities are destroyed, by the tongue commeth much harme. Then said one of them that sate at the table, Exantus if thou set thy minde vpon this foole, he will bring thee out of thy wit, for he sheweth well by his fashions that he is knauish: and like as he is deformed of his body, so is he of his cõditions. And Esop said to him, thou art a make-bate, for thou makest strife betwixt the Master and the seruant, and weenest thou to be more curious then other? And Exantus for to find cause to beat Esope, said, Ah great headed villaine, because that thou callest the Philosopher curious, goe get me a man y careth for nothing, that is to say, one that is nothing curious nor diligent.

How Esop went out and found one that cared for nothing.

ESop departed and went out of the place, beholding heere any there, if hee could finde ano man

that was not curious nor cared for nothing: he went abroad and espyed a great villaine sitting on a blocke wagging his legs and whistling with his mouth, to whom Esop said, My Lord desireth thee to come and dine with him; which anon rose, without saying any word, and entred into the house with Esop, and not saying God speed you, sate downe at the table. And Exantus said to Esop, what man is this? Esop said, a man that careth for nothing. Thē Exantus said vnto his wife secretly, to the intent that we may auenge vs on Esop and beate him well, faire loue do that I bid you. Then he said aloud, dame put water in a bason and washt his pilgrimes feet, for hee thought the villaine would not haue suffered it, but to haue refused it for shame and then should he haue had cause to haue beaten Esop. Then the Lady tooke water & put it in a bason, and began to wash the villaines feete. And howbeit that shee was his Lady: yet this villaine thought, this Lord will doe mee some worship, and suffered her to wash his feet, without saying any word. And Exantus said to his wife, dame giue him drinke. And the villaine said to himselfe, it is well worthy that I drink first, and he tooke the piece and dranke as much as he might. And Exantus tooke the Platter with the Fish, and set before him. And the villaine strained no curtesie, but eate it euery morsell. And Exantus saide to the Cooke, this fish is not well dreſt. Then Exantus commanded the Cooke to bee beaten. And the Villaine saide to himselfe, this Fish is well dight, and the Cooke is beaten without cause, but I care not, so that I may fill my belly, and I shall alway eate and say nothing.

nothing. Exantus said vnto the Cok, bring in a Tart, and incontinent as a Tart was brought, the villaine brake it in pieces, & without any words he began to eate therof. And Exantus beholding him how he eate, called the Cooke and said, this tart is euill baked and hath no sauour. And the Cooke said, if I made it, it is well dreſt, and if it be none of mine, the blame is not in me but in thy wife. Exantus said: Then and if my wife hath made it, I shall burne her alive, and bad his wife she should not answer, because he would finde cause to beat Esop: and then said Exantus to one of his seruants, Goe fetch some wood & bushes to burne my wife: and this said he to see if the villaine would arise and saue her from burning; and the villaine said to himselfe, this man will burne his wife without cause. Then said he vnto Exantus; Sir, if thou wilt burne thy wife, abide a little while, and I shall goe fetch my wife in the field, and burne them both together. Exantus hauing heard these words he marueiled much, and said: Verily this man careth for nothing. And then he said to Esope, thou hast vanquished me. But now let it suffice thee from henceforth, if thou wilt serue me truely, thou shalt sooner returne into thy liberty. Then Esope said vnto him, I shall serue thee so now as thou wert neuer better serued. Now three dayes after Exantus sayd to Esope, Goe and see if there be much people in the Bath, For if there be none, I will goe there and bathe mee: and as Esop went by the way, hee met with the Iudge of the Citty; and because he knew him, he saide to Esop, whither goest thou great head? Esop sayd vnto him, I wot not: because he weened he mocked him,

the

the Iudge commanded him to prison: and as he was led, he said to the Iudge: loe I said to thee well, that I wist not whither I went, for I supposed thou wouldest not haue put me in prison. And the Iudge began to smile, and said to them that led him: let him goe. And as Esop went to the baine, hee saw a great company of men which were there leaping, and there lay a stone at the entry doore, at which they stumbled and hurt their feete, and there was one that entred in and stumbled thereon, and anon he tooke it away, because that there should no more be hurt thereat. After Esop returned home to his Master Exantus, and said that there was but one man in the baine: Exantus then said to Esop, take such things as bee needfull for vs, and let vs go thither: and when they were come to the baine, he saw a great company, and said to Esop, now art thou worthy to be beaten, for thou saidst to me there was but one man, and there bee moe then a hundreth. And Esop said to him, there is but one man, and if thou wilt heare me, thou shalt say that I say troth: for that stone which thou seest at the entry of the bath, all that passed by stumbled at the stone, and none was so wise to take it away but this one man, and therefore I say, that there was no man but hee, for all the other are but children and ignorant. And Exantus said to him, thou hast well excused thee: and Exantus found no cause to beate Esop.

Of the answer that Esop made to his Master.

After that Exantus had washed him, hee went homeward, and as he went he purged his belly and eased him by the way, and Esop was beside with a paile

a paile full of water. And Exantus said to Esop, wherefore is it, that when a man hath eased him, and purged his belly, he looketh vpon the ordure therof? And Esop answered him, and said: There was in time past a Philosopher that oft purged his belly, and for feare that he should leese his science, euer looked and beheld if he voided it with his filth or ordure when he had purged his belly; and so euer after men looked when they purged their bellies what they voide, but thou oughtest not to doubt therof, for thou hast no wit nor science to leese, for to a foolish demand belongeth a foolish answer. And on the morrow next following, as Exantus was set at the table with al his friends, holding a cup with wine in his hand, his hand shooke for feare of the questions that men asked him. And Esop said, Master, Dionysius saith, that good wine hath three vertues, the first is, voluptuousnes, the second is gladnes, and the third is that it maketh men fooles and out of their wittes, wherefore I pray thee let vs drinke and make good cheere: and because that Exantus was then almost drunke, (for he had well drunken) he said to Esop, Hold thy peace, for thou art a counseiler of hell. I shall auenge mee on thy selfe.

How Exantus promised to drinke all the water in the Sea.

And then one of the schollers, seeing that Exantus had drunke enough, & was charged with ouer-much wine, said vnto him, my master, I aske of thee, if a man may drinke the sea? Wherefore not said Exantus? I my selfe shall drinke it well. Then said the Scholler againe, And if thou drinke it

it not what wilt thou lese? And Exantus said: My house. I am content said the scholler, and against thee I will lay an hundred crownes on the bargaine; and this done, each of them gaue their pledges, their signet of gold, & then went home. And on the morrow Exantus rose out of his bed, and saw that he had lost his ring off his finger, he said to Esop: knowest thou not where my ring is? I know not said Esop, but well I know for certaine, that this day we shal be put out of our house. And why said Exantus? Esop said to him remembrest thou not the bargaine that thou madest yesterday at euen? what bargaine, said Exantus? Esop said, that thou art bound to drinke all the sea, and for gage hast left thy ring of gold: and when Exantus heard these words, he was sore abashed, and said: in what manner shall I drinke all the sea? this may not be, for it is vnpossible: wherefore Esop I pray thee tel me, if it please thee, how I may vanquish or breake this bargaine. And Esop said thou shalt lese, but perhappes I shall make that thou shalt well breake the bargaine. And the manner of it (said Esope) is this, that when thine aduersary shall require thee to fulfill thy promise, thou shalt command seruants that they bring a table, and all such other things as is necessary to be vpon the riuage of the sea, and make the butlers and seruants to abide there with thee, and before all the company thou shalt make a peece to be washed and filled full of the water of the sea, and shalt take it in thy hand, and pray that the Bargaine may be declared before all the fellowship, and say thou wilt assure the promise as well before drinke as after; and thus shalt thou say to all the fellowship,

ship, My Lords of Samie, ye know how yesterday at euen, I made promise to drinke vp all the water in the sea. But all ye wot well how many great floods and riuers come and fall into the Sea. Therefore I demand (and as reason is) that mine aduersary kepe and hold the riuers that they enter not into the sea, and then shall I drinke all the waters in the sea, and so the bargaine shall be broken and vndone.

How Exantus excused him from his promise by the counsell of Esope.

EXantus then knowing that the counsell of Esop was good, he was full glad. His aduersary then came before Zenas, one of the city, to tell & shew the bargaine, & prayed the iudge that Exantus should doe that which he had promised to doe. And Exantus commanded all his seruants that they should beare his bed, and his table, and all other things that were necessary to him vpon the riuage of the sea. And then before all the company he made a pece to be washed, & filled it full of the water of the sea, which he tooke in his hand and said to his aduersary, declare we now our bargaine: and Exantus then turned him toward the fellowship & said, my Lords of Samy, ye wot well how many floods & riuers enter into the sea, & if my aduersary will hold thē still, so that they enter no more into the sea, then will I drinke all the water that is in the sea. And all they that were there began to say, Exantus saith wel. And the aduersary said to Exantus, my master, thou hast vanquished mee, wherefore I pray thee, that our bargaine may be broken. And Exantus said I am content: and when Exantus was turned home into his house, Esope did pray to him saying

ſaying thus: My maſter, becauſe, I haue holpen the: at thy need, let me now goe at my liberty.

How Exantus found cauſe to beate Eſope.

EXantus then curſed him, ſaying: great head, yet ſhalt thou not eſcape frē nor go frō me: go thou, ſee and behold before the gate if thou canſt eſpy two crowes together, & then come againe and tell me, for the ſight of two crowes one nigh the other, is good fortune, but the ſight of one alone is euil fortune. And as Eſop went out of the houſe, he ſaw two crowes vp on a tree, wherefore he ſoon returned againe and told his Maſter. But as Exantus went out of the houſe, the one of them flew away, then ſaid he, ah great head where be the two crowes that thou ſaweſt? And Eſop ſaid, as I went to call thee, the one flew away. And Exantus ſaid, ah thou crook-backed knaue, it is euer thus thy manner to mock me: but thou ſhalt not thus ſcape ſcotfree, wherefore he commanded him to vndoe his clothes, that he might be beaten, and as the men were beating him, Exantus was called to dinner, and then Eſope ſaid, alas, how much miſerable am I, for I haue ſeene two crowes and yet am I beaten, and Exantus which ſaw but one, is called to dainty fare: ſurely there is none to whom the birds bee ſo contrary as to me. And when Exantus heard him, he much marualled at the ſubtilty of his wit, and commanded to leaue beating him. And within a while after, Exantus ſaid to Eſop, Goe thou and dreſſe vs ſome meate to our dinner, for all theſe Lords ſhall dine with mee, and Eſope went to the market and bought

bought all that he could buy, and when it was ready, he brought it into the Hall, where he found his Miſtris lying on the bed ſleeping: wherefore he awaked her and ſayd: Madam, pleaſe it you, to take heede of this meate, that the dogs and cats eate it not, for I muſt go into the kitchin againe: and ſhe ſaid to him; Goe thou where thou wilt, for my buttockes haue eyes. And when Eſope had made ready all the other meats, he brought them into the Hall, and found his miſtris faſt aſleep with her buttocks towards the table; and becauſe ſhe ſaid, that her buttocks had eyes, Eſope tooke vp her clothes, ſo as euery man might ſée her taile; and thus he left her ſleeping.

How Exantus found his wife all diſcouered.

AND when Exantus and his Schollers came to Dinner, they perceiued his wife as ſhee was ſleeping her buttocks all bare and naked. With great ſhame Exantus turned his face toward Eſope, ſaying knaue, what is this? And Eſope ſayd: My Lord, as I did put the meate vpon the Table, I prayed my Lady that ſhe would keepe it from the dogges, and ſhe anſwerd, that her buttockes had eyes; and becauſe I found her ſleeping, I diſcouered her buttockes, to the intent that her buttockes might the better ſee and look about. Then Exantus replied vnto him, ah thou ſhrewd and crooke-backed villaine, oft haſt thou ſerued mee ſuch knauiſh trickes: What worſe thing canſt thou doe to me, than to mocke both mee and my wife alſo? but the time will come that I ſhall make thee die an euill death. And within a while after,

Exantus

Exantus ſaid to Eſop: Look well that no fooles enter into my houſe, but onely the Orators and Philoſophers. Eſop ſet himſelfe beſide the Gate, and as one of the Philoſophers ſhould haue entred, Eſop began to grin and ſayd, Come in thou dogge; and the Philoſopher thinking he had derided him, al wroth went his way: and thus did many other. But at the laſt, came there one that was very ſubtile, to whom Eſop did as he had done to the other: & he that was wiſe, anſwered him ſwetly, and then Eſop did let him enter into the houſe, and anon he went againe to his Lord and ſaid, No Philoſopher is come to the gate, but this one: wherefore Exantus thought al the other had mockt him, and was very angry. On the morrow as they met with Exantus, they ſaid to him thus; Exantus, thou mockedſt vs wel yeſterday; for he that kept the gate, caſt on vs a ſhrewd loke, and called vs Dogs: for which cauſe Exantus was more troubled than he was before. And anon he called Eſop, and ſayd to him; Go thou crooke-backed counterfeited, and falſe churle, they whom thou ſhouldſt haue receiued with worſhip and great honour, thoſe thou haſt vitupered and mocked. Eſop ſayd vnto him, Thou chargedſt and commandedſt me, that I ſhould let none enter into thy houſe, but wiſe Philoſophers. And Exantus ſayd; Ah falſe face, and crooke-backed knaue, be not theſe wiſe Philoſophers? No certainly, replied Eſop; for when I bade them enter into thy houſe, they entred not, and like fooles went their wayes againe, without ſaying any word: but this one anſwered wiſely; and therefore I repute and allow him a ſage and wiſe Philoſopher; and the other

as

as fooles, for a foole is he that taketh any light thing in anger. And then all the Samiens and Philoſophers that were there, approoued the anſwer of Eſop, and they marueiled much at his wiſedome.

How Eſop found a treaſure, and how Exantus made him to be put in priſon.

And within a while after, as Exantus & Eſop were together beholding the great ſepulchers or tombs and the Epitaphs of ancient folke, Eſop perceiued an arch that was nigh of a columne, vnto the which men went vnto by foure ſteps; thither he went, and without any conſonants he ſaw letters written, after the manner following A B E O C T H C H. Then Eſop called his maſter and ſaid vnto him: My Lord, what betokeneth theſe Letters: Exantus looked and beheld them well, and knew not what they ſhould ſignifie: wherefore he ſaid to Eſop, tell me what theſe letters ſignifie, and Eſop ſaid my Lord if I ſhew thee a faire treaſure, what reward ſhall I haue of thee? Exantus ſaid: haue thou a good courage, for I ſhall giue thee freedome and libertie and halfe of the treaſure: and anon Eſop went downe the foure ſteps, and ſo deepe he delued at the foote of the columne, that he found the hidden treaſure: which anon he brought vp to his Lord and ſaid: My Lord, I pray thee that thou wilt do vnto me as thou haſt promiſed: and Exantus ſaid to him, or euer thou haſt liberty and freedome, thou muſt learne me how thou knoweſt this Science; for the vnderſtanding thereof, ſhall be more precious vnto me then to haue all the treaſure: & Eſop ſaid, he that had this treaſure, had ſpecified it by the letters

which is here written in Latine, Ascende gradus istos quatuor, fodias & inuenies Thesaurum auri.

Then Exantus told him: Sith thou art so subtile thou shalt not yet haue libertie: and Esope said vnto him, Looke well what thou dost, for this treasure appertaineth to the king Dionysius. And Exantus asked of him how he knew that? and Esope said, by the Letters, which signifie vnto vs: that thou giue vnto Dionysius the treasure which thou hast found. And when Exantus heard him say that the treasure which the found was as pertaining to the king Dionysius, he said thus: Esope, take thou the one halfe of this treasure, and let no man know of it. Esope then said vnto him, thou giuest it me not, but he that hid it here giueth it vnto me. And Exantus said, How knowest thou that? Esope answered, by the letters following, which signifie the same, to wit, E D Q I T A. The which letters signifie in Latine, Euntes dimitte quem inuenistis Thesaurum auri. And them Exantus said: goe we home, and there we shall part it.

How Exantus deliuered Esop out of prison, and how Exantus promised him freedome and libertie.

After that Exantus was returned home againe, he marualled greatly at the wisedome of Esope. But for the libertie and freedome which hee demanded, he was angry, and dreading the tongue of Esop made him to bee put in prison. Then said Esope, this is a faire promise of a Philosopher. Thou wottest well how thou promisedst vnto me freedome and liberty,

liberty, but in stead thereof I am put into prison. When as Exantus heard him say so, he reuoked and changed his sentence, and made him to be deliuered, and after said vnto him, If thou wilt be put to thy liberty, hold thy tongue in peace, & accuse me no more. And Esop said, Doe what thou wilt, for whether thou wilt or no, thou shalt shortly set me at liberty. That same time befell a marualous thing within the Citie of Samie. For as men played there the common & publike playes, as yet they be accustomed to doe in many good cities, an Eagle suddenly flew through al the company of people, and took and bare away with him, the Ring and seale of the soueraignty and puissance of all that City, and let it fall into the pit of a man who was not in liberty: for which deed and token, all the people of Samie marualed greatly, and there arose a great rumor in the City among the people. For much they were doubtfull of some persecution, and wist not what the thing might signifie, wherefore they were in great doubt and heauinesse.

Wherefore incontinent they came toward Exantus as vnto him which they held for the most sage and wise man of the City of Samie, and demaunded of him what this maruell signified, and also what was likely to fall thereby. Exantus was ignorant, and knew not the signification of this maruell, whereupon hee demanded of the people time and space for to giue hereupon an answer. Exantus then was in great heauinesse, because he wist not what to say to this thing: and Esop seeing him so heauy and full of sorrow, said vnto him, My Maister, why art thou so heauy in thy countenance? leaue sorrow and take

with thee ioy and gladnes, giue me the charge to answer the Samians, and to morrow thou shalt say to them these words, My Lords of Samie, I am no Diuine, nor interpreter of the marualous things that be to come, neuertheless, I haue a seruant in my house, which (as he saith) can tell these things, if it please you, I shall make him come before you, & then by my counsell if I shall satisfie all the fellowship, thou shalt therefore receiue and haue worship, glory and profit; and if I cannot satisfie them, thou shalt be deliuered of great infamy and shame, and I shall be rebuked, & put to great shame: then Exantus hauing his trust in the words of Esop, went on the morrow to the great place of Samy and assembled there the people, & went vp on high whereas the Iudge was accustomed to sit: and as he had learned of his seruant Esop, so hee declared there before the Samiens. The which things when he had said, they praied him that he would cause his seruant to come before them. And anon Esop came thither, and as he stood before all the company, al the people present looked and beheld him with great marueil, because he was deformed and crooked of body, & sayd, Looke, here is a faire person, able to be a sure diuine; and went and mocked him. And Esop beeing then on the highest part of al the place, began to make a signe with his hand vnto all the people, to the end that they should hold their peace and keepe silence: and then he spake vnto them in this manner:

My Lords, for what cause laugh yee and scorne mee for my forme? know yee not, that men must not looke in the face of a man, to see and behold of what figure or forme hee is of, but onely to know wise-

dome?

dome? Also men ought not to take heede of the vessell, for oft a foule vessell is full of good Wine. And when the Samians heard these words, they said to Esop, if thou canst giue vs good counsell for all the wealth of the common people, we all pray thee that thou wilt doe it.

And then Esop hauing confidence and trust in his wisedome, said thus: Fortune which (loueth dissention) hath this day set and put debate and strife betweene the Lord and the seruant; for he that shall vanquish, shall not be paide nor rewarded after his desert. For if the Lord get the victory, I that am his seruant shall get no libertie as right requireth, but I shall be beaten and cursed, and imprisoned: wherefore if ye will that I giue a ful solution of that ye demand, I aske and require you that ye doe make mée free, and set me againe into my liberty, to the intent that with trust, confidence, and audacity, I may speake to you: and I promise and assure you, that I shall shew you (to your profit) the true signification and plaine vnderstanding of this great anger and signe.

And they all said with an equall voyce, hee asketh a thing very reasonable and iust, wherefore Exantus shall make him free, and giue him his liberty as reason is. Which thing when Exantus heard, he refused to doe. And the Lord of the authority publique, said vnto him. Exantus, if thou wilt not obey to the people, I shall by my owne authoritie, take him out of thy seruice, and shall set him at liberty, and make him equall with thee.

How Esop was restored vnto his liberty by the will of his Master.

AND because that Exantus was required of al his friends, that he should restore and put Esop into liberty, he said to Esope, albeit that it is not my good will, yet I giue thee liberty. And anon he that made the Proclamation, went into euery place where such Proclamation should be made, and proclaimed, Exantus had giuen free liberty to Esope. And when this was done. Esop went into the midst of all the fellowship, and made a signe with his hand, that euery one should keepe silence, and after said, my Lords of Samie, the Eagle which is king aboue all other birds, as the king is aboue the people, this bird hath taken away the effect and seale of your Gouernour: This betokeneth and signifieth, that a King shall aske and demand your liberty, and destroy your lawes. And when the Samians heard these words, they were abashed, and anon came the Pursiuant with letters, and demanded after the signet of the Samians. The messenger was brought before the councell of the towne, to whom he presented his letters, containing the sentence following. Crassus king of Lindians to the Senate and common people of Samy, greeting and commanding you, that you do to me obeysance, and pay mee tributes, which if you refuse to doe, I shall put you to death and burne your towne. Whereat the Samians were abashed, and for feare willing to obey vnto him. But neuertheless, first they went to Esop. and prayed him to say thereof his minde. The which said: My Lords of Samie, albeit that I would yee

inclined

inclined to obey the King of Lindy, neuertheleſſe, to the intent that I may counſel you that which is uedfull, and for the publike wealth and profit, I doe you to know, that Fortune in this mortall life, doth ſhew two things, and two manner of waies: The one is liberty, whereof the beginning is hard and difficult, but the end of it good and eaſie. The other part is ſeruitude, whereof the beginning is eaſie, but the end thereof is ſharp & bitter. And when the Samiens heard theſe words, knowing that they tended to the good of the common wealth, they conſented to take ẏ aduice of Eſope, and ſaid altogether, becauſe that we be in liberty, we will not be ſeruants vnto any man: and with this anſwer ſent againe the meſſenger to Craſſus. And when the king heard this anſwer, hee was wroth and gathered all his men of war, and all the nobles of his realme, and prepared a great armie to deſtroy the Samiens. The which thing he might haue brought about had not the meſſenger bin, which ſaid vnto him, Right dear ſir, thou maiſt not be auenged on the Samiens ſo long as they haue Eſope with them, which in al their affaires and deeds helpeth and counſelleth them; wherefore it is neceſſary that thou ſend an Embaſſador vnto the Samiens, that they ſhall ſend thee Eſope, and that thou wilt pardon & forgiue them their treſpaſſe, for if thou maiſt haue Eſope, they of Samy be in thy hands. And the king ſuddenly ſent Embaſſadors to them of Samy, the which Embaſſadors applied and ſet their wits, to ſhew vnto the Senate of Samy the will of their Lord Craſſus: and ſaid that they ſhould ſend Eſope ſpeedily vnto him: and when Eſope vnderſtood what the king deman-

ded, hee said to the Samians, My Lords, it pleaseth me well to goe toward the king, but before I goe, I will tell you a Fable.

How the Wolues sent their Embassadours to the sheepe.

IN time when beasts could speake, the Wolues made warre against the Sheepe, and because the Sheepe might not keepe them, nor hold against the Wolues, they demanded helpe of the Dogges, by the which the sheepe made the wolues to returne backward. And because the Wolues could nor might not get nor haue any prey, nor winne nothing vpon the sheepe because of the dogs that kept them, the wolues on a time sent an Embassador vnto the sheepe, for to haue perpetuall peace with them: and for to haue peace, the Wolues went and demanded, that for to eschew all suspition, the Dogs should be giuen to the Wolues, or else destroyed for euer. And the Sheep as fooles, in hope of peace and concord, consented to their demand. And when all the dogs were slaine, the wolues took vengeance vpon the sheep, as daily appeareth. When Esop rehearseth this fable, the Samians detemined among themselues, that Esop should not goe toward the King.

How Esop obeyed not Samians, but went toward the King.

ESop obeyed not the will of the Samians, but went with the Embassadors towards the King. And when he was come to the kings court, the King seeing that Esop was so deformed, and croked of body, he was angry and wroth with himselfe, and said with great maruell, Is this same he, for the truth of whom

whom they of Samy would not obey vnto me? Esope then said: Ah right deare Sir and king, certainly I am not come before thy Maiestie by force, but of my good will I am come to thee, trusting so much vpon thy benignity, that thou wilt heare what I shall say vnto thee.

The king gaue him audience, & leaue to say what he would, and thus he began: The other day there was a man which chased the Flyes, the which man toke a Nightingale, & the Nightingale seeing that he would haue killed her, said to the Faulconer, I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me, for to no body I do any harme or danger, for I eate not the corne, nor destroy the fruits of the earth, but giue solace and ioy to all them that goe by the way with my song and voice, and of me shalt thou haue but onely a little carkasse: and when the Falconer heard the bird speake these words, he let her go. Wherefore (right deare Sir) I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me which am nought and nothing worth, for to no body I doe harme nor would I doe. And for the defect and feblenesse of my body, I may not do, but I can speake and say things that bee profitable to them that be in the mortall life of this present world. The king then maruelled and was moued to pittie, and said to Esop, I giue not to thee thy life, for fortune giueth it thee, & if thou wilt haue ought else of me, aske & it shal be giuen thee. Then Esop said, I aske nothing of thee, but onely that thou giue me the tribute of the Samians. Well, said the king, I am content. Then Esop greatly thanked the king, and after that he composed the Fables which be written here in this book,

and

and to the King he gaue them, and demanded of him the letters of the gift, for the remission of the tributes of the Samians, the which were deliuered to him by the Kings commandement, and with his good will, and many other gifts: and Esop then tooke his leaue of the King, and returned to Samy.

How Esop returned to Samy againe.

After that Esop was arriued in Samy, the people receiued him worshipfully, and made great ioy at his comming. And Esop commanded the people to be assembled together at a certaine day in the place appointed. And when as Esop was set in the seate, he read vnto them the royall Letters of king Crassus, how he remitted and forgaue them the tributes. After this Esope departed from Samy, and would goe sport himselfe through many Regions, nations, and cities, giuing ensignments by histories and fables vnto mortall men. Amongst the rest he came to Babylon; & because he did shew there his wisedome, he was receiued and worshipfully feasted of Lycure king of Babylon. At that time the kings did send one to another playes and problematicks, and such other pleasant deuices for their disports: and he which could not interpret them, sent tribute to him that sent them. And because that Esope could interpret them, hee taught the king of Babylon the manner of it. After that he composed many Fables, which the king of Babylon sent to other kings, and because they could not interpret them, they sent many tributes vnto him, whereby his whole realme was mightily enriched. After that because Esop had no yong children,

hee

he adopted a noble young childe to bee his sonne; the which he presented to the king: and he receiued him as if he had beene his owne sonne, which child was named Enus. This Enus within a little while after medled with the chamberer of Esop, which he held for his wife, and often knew her bodily, and because hee was greatly in doubt that Esop would auenge himselfe, hee accused Esop to the king of diuers crimes and high treason, he also composed false letters, shewing by them to the king, how Esop by fables which he sent here and there, had betrayed him, and that he had conspired his death.

How the King commanded that Esope should be put to death, and how he was saued.

THe king Lycure beleeuing & giuing credit to the accusation made against Esop, was very wroth, and commaunded Horope his Seneschall that Esop should be put to death. But Horope seeing that his sentence was vniust, kept Esop secretly within a Sepulcher, and all his goods were giuen to his son which had accused him. Long after this Nactabanus king of Egypt, weening that Esope had certainly been put to death, according to the commandement, sent a proposition problematick to Lycure king of Babylō, which was as followeth. Nactabanus king of Egypt sendeth greeting vnto Lycure king of Babylō. Because I wold edifie & build a tower the which shall not touch heauē nor earth, I pray thee send vnto me Masons to make vp the said tower: and this requeſt beeing accomplished, I shall giue vnto thee the tenth tribute of all my

my lands and realmes. And when the King of Babylon heard this demand, he was greatly troubled and wroth, & thought how he might giue answer to this question. And when he had called al his sages, for to haue the solution thereof, and found none that could declare the same, the King was more angry then hee was before. And for the great sorrow that he tooke thereof, he fell downe to the ground, and said: Alas, I am miserable, and haue lost the crowne of my realme. Cursed bee he, by whom I made Esope to bée put to death. And when Horope the Senechall knew the great anguish and sorrow of the King: he said to him, Right deare sir, take no more sorrow in thy heart, but pardon & forgiue me, for I made not Esop to bee put to death as thou commandedst me; for wel I wist that yet thou shouldest haue need of him: and doubting to displease thy Maiesty, since that day to this I haue kept him in a Sepulcher. When the King heard this, he was very glad, and anon he rose from the ground where he lay, and went and embraced the Senechall saying: if it be so that Esop may be found aliue, during my selfe I shall be bound to thee, and therefore I pray thee if it be so, let him come to me quickly.

How Esope was brought before the King, and how the King commanded, that he should be put in his former office and dignity againe.

ESop being brought before the King, fell downe at the Kings feet. And when the King saw that Esope loked so pale and ill, hee had of him great pitty, and commanded that hee should bée taken vp and

and newly cloathed. And when Esope was vpon his feete, he came before the King, and ful meekly saluted him, and demanded of him the cause why he had been put in prison. Then the King said, that his adopted sonne Enus had accused him: and the King commanded that Enus should be punished with such paine, as those deserue that deuise the death of their Fathers. But Esope prayed the King hee would forgiue him. And when the King shewed Esop the question of the King of Egypt, & when Esop had seene the Letter, he said to the King, Write againe to the King of Egypt, & giue to him this answer: That after the winter shall bee passed and gone, thou shalt send vnto him workmen to build and make vp his Tower. And thus hee sent Embassadors to the King of Egypt. After this, the King made all the goods of Esope to be restored vnto him, and he to be put in his first dignity, giuing him full authority and might to punish his sonne after his owne will. But Esop benignly receiued again into his house his adopted Son, and sweetly chastised and corrected him, and said: my sonne, obserue you my commandements, and keepe them in thy memory: For we giue well counsaile to other, but for our selues we cannot take it: but because thou art an humane man thou must be subiect to Fortune: Therfore thou shalt first loue God, and keepe thy selfe from the wrath and anger of the King.

And because that thou art an humane man, haue thy care & solicitude on humane things, for GOD doth punish the wicked folke: also it is no good or heauenly thing to doe any body harme, but shew thy selfe cruell to those that are thine enemies, to

the end that of them thou be not condemned: and to friends make ioyfull semblance and good chere, to the end that thou maiest haue the more assurance of their helpe and good will; for thou oughtest to desire prosperity and welfare to thy friends, and aduersity to all thine enemies. Thou maiest speake faire to thy wife, to the intent that she take not another man; because a woman is variable, and as men flatter and speake faire to her, she is lesse inclined to do any euill. Keepe thee well from the fellowship of the cruell man: for albeit that he haue good prosperity, yet he is miserable. Stop thine eares, and hold well thy tongue from such talking, and haue no enuy at other mens goods, for enuy hindereth the enuious. Haue care and regard ouer thy family, and that thou maiest be loued like a Lord, haue shame in thy selfe to doe any thing against reason, & be negligent or retchlesse to learne euery day. Tell not thy counsell to thy wife, spend nor waste not thy goods wilfully, for better it is to a man to leaue his goods after his death, then to bee a begger in his life. Salute ioyfully such as thou meetest by the way. For the dogge maketh signe of ioy with his taile to such as hee knoweth by the way. Mock no man, neuer hide thy wisedome, & al that thou borrowest giue it againe with good will: & those which thou maiest helpe, refuse not to doe good to. Keepe thee from euill company: shew to thy friends thy affaires and busines, and beware that thou do nothing whereof thou maiest repent thee afterward: and when aduersity commeth, beare it patiently. Harbour them that be harbourlesse, cloath the naked. A good word appeaseth anger. Surely he is happy that may get

him

him a good friend: for nothing is so secretly kept, but one time or other it wil come to light.

How Enus departed from Esope, and went and killed himselfe.

THus with many admonitions did Esope instruct his sonne, and Enus departed and said, that vniustly and without cause he had accused Esop, for which he was full of heauines and sorrow, and went vp to the top of a high mountaine, and from thence cast himselfe downe to the bottome: and thus wilfully he brake his bones and killed himselfe, as he had euer kept euill rule and misgouernance: for of an euill life commeth an euill end. After this, Esope commanded the Faulconers that they should take foure young Eagles which were not yet forth of their nest. And when Esop had them, hee accustomed them to eate their meate high and low, and each of them had to their fete two children fastened and bound: and as the children lift vpward, made their meate to come downeward, the young Eagles likewise followed vp and downe to take their meate.

These things thus ordered, and Winter beeing gone and past, Esop tooke leaue of King Lycure, and with his Eagles and children went into Egipt, and when he was come before the King, the king seeing Esope so deformed and croke-backed, thought in himselfe that hee was but a beast, and that the King of Babylon mocked him and his person, for he considered not that a foule vessell might bee full of good Wine. For men ought not onely to take heede of the vessell, but to that which is in it. Esope then presently kneeled before the king, and right humbly saluted

saluted him: and the King sitting in his Maiestie, saluted him right graciously and benignly saying in this manner: How likest thou me & mine? And Esop answered, Sir, thou seemest to me to be the Sunne, and thy men the beames thereof.

How Esope made solution to the King of Egypt, vpon the question which he sent to the King of Babylon.

THe King hauing heard the answer of Esop, greatly marueiled that he was so subtil in his answers & said to him in this manner, Hast thou brought with thee all them that shall edifie and make vp my Tower? I haue said Esop. But first thou must shew vnto me the place where as thou wilt haue it. The king then departed out of the place, and set Esop in a faire field, and said, Seest thou this faire field? It is the place where I would haue my tower. Esope then to each corner of this field laid an Eagle with two children. The children held the meat vpward in the ayre, & the Eagles began to flie after it. And then the children with an high voice began to cry, saying: Bring vs now clay, stone, brick, wood, and tiles, and we shal build vp the Tower. And when the king saw this, hee said to Esop, as by great admiration: What haue ye men in your land which haue wings? Esop said, yea, we haue many such. Then said the king to Esop, Thou hast vanquished me by thy reasons & words. But I pray thee answer mee vnto this question. I haue made mares to be brought to me out of Greece, and they haue received and bare horses by the help of the horses of Babylon. And Esop then answered him,

Sir

Sir, to morrow I shall giue you an answer vnto this question. And after that Esop was returned to his looging, he said in this manner to his seruants: Looke that among you ye get me a great Cat. and the seruants accomplished the will of Esop. Then Esop openly before the folkes made the Cat to be beaten with rods: and as the Egyptians saw this, they ran anon after the Cat to haue taken him, but they might not: which feate done, the Egyptians went and told the king thereof. And anon the King commanded that Esop should be brought before his person. And when Esop was come, the king said vnto him; Come hither. what hast thou done? wottest thou not that the god which is adored and worshipped of vs, is of the figure and likenesse of a Cat? For certaine all the Egyptians worship and adore the Idoll made after the forme and figure of a Cat. wherefore greatly hast thou offended. And Esope said thus to the King: Sir, this false and euill beast, on the night last past, offended against the King of Babylon, for this beast hath slaine a Cocke which he much loued, because he fought so strongly, and sung on the houres of the night. And the King said: Esope, I should neuer haue thought that thou would'st haue made so great a leasing before mee. For it may not be that this Cat should haue gone and come in a night from hence to Babylon. And Esope smiling said to him, Sir, in such manner commeth and goeth to Babylon horses, which the mares brought out of Greece conceiued, and bare yong horses. And the king hearing this, praised greatly the wisedome of Esope, and then the King made more of him, and

more worshipped him then he did before. And on the next morrow after, the King of Egypt made all the chiefest and greatest of his Philosophers, and wisest men in all the countrey to be called before him, the which hee informed of the great subtilty and wit of Esop, and commanded them to goe to Supper into his court with Esope. Then they beeing set at the table, one of them said thus to Esope, thou must pardon mee, for hither am I sent to speake with thee: and Esope said, say what it pleaseth thee: and he said: It is Gods will no man should make any leasings. And after, another said vnto Esope, there is a great temple, in the which is a columne right great, the which columne beareth and sustaineth twelue Cities, and euery Citie is couered with xxx. great sailes, vpon the which two women be euer running. And Esop answered him in this manner, The small and little children in Babylon, know the solution of this question. For this temple whereof thou speakest is heauen, and the columne is the earth, the xii. Cities be the xii. moneths of the yeere, and the xxx. sailes be the daies of the moneths, and the two women which be euer running ouer these sailes, is the day and the night. Then said the King of Egypt to the Lords of his court, it is now right and reason, that I doe send gifts and tributes to the King of Babylon. And one of them said to the King: Sir, we must yet make to him another question, the which is this. What is that we neuer heard ne saw? And the King prayed Esop to giue solution to this question. And Esop went to his lodging, and fained to make an Obligation, on the which hee made to bee written this that follow-

followeth. I Nectabanus King of Egypt, make it knowne to all men, that I haue borrowed of King Lycure a thousand marke of gold, which I Nectabanus promised to pay to the said king Lycure within a certaine time, (which then was past:) this writing did Esope present on the morrow following to the King of Egypt, which greatly marueiled thereat, and said to the noblemen of his court that were there present: Haue you seene or euer heard say, that the King Lycure hath lent to mee any money or other thing? And as the Lords say nay, Esop then said to them: If it be as ye say, then your question is assoyled, for now ye heare and see that which you neuer heard nor saw. And then they of Egypt said, that king Lycure was happy and fortunate, to haue such a subiect and seruant as Esop was, and the King sent Esop againe vnto Babylon with great gifts, and tributes for the King of Babylon.

How Esop returned into Babylon, and how the King caused a statue or image of gold to be set vp in honour of him.

After Esope was come againe before the King of Babylon, hee rehearseth to him all hee had done in Egypt. Wherefore the King commanded, that in the worship of Esop, a Statue or Image of gold should bee set vp in the publique or common place. Within a while after, Esop had great desire to goe into Greece, and asked leaue of the King to goe thither, whereof the King was sorrowfull, and Esop promised him, that he would returne into Babylon, and there he would liue and die with him: and

thus the King granted to him leaue. And as Esop trauelled through all the Cities of Greece with worship, he shewed his Sapience and Fables, in such wise that he got worship and glory, and was renowned through all the Land of Greece. At the last hee came into the Land of Delphy, which was the best prouince in all Greece. The Citizens then of the Citie of Delphy, by their enuy mocked and dishonored Esop, and Esop said vnto them: My Lords, ye be like the wood which is carried on the Sea, for when men see it a farre off, being tolled with the waues, it seemes to be right great, but when men be neere, it appeareth but a small thing. Thus is it of you, for when I was farre from you, I weened that ye had beene the best of all the land, and now I know that ye be the worst. And when the Delphines heard these words, they held a counsell together, and one of them said: Most wise Lord, ye know very well how that this man hath had great glory in all the Cities and places where he hath beene, wherefore if wee take not heede to our selues, he will robbe vs of our great authoritie, and destroy vs. Then they imagined how and in what manner they might put him to death, but they durst not attempt it for the great company of strangers that were then within the Citie. Neuertheless, as they espied one of the seruants of Esop making the males and other geare ready to ride and depart thence; they went and tooke a cup of gold out of the temple of Apollo, and secretly put it into the male of Esope. Esop then beeing ignorant hereof, departed from Delphy. But ere he was farre, the traytors ranne after, making great noyse and clamor.

clamour. And Esop said to them, My Lords, why take ye me? And they said, ha theefe of celestiall ornaments, crook-backed and sacrilegious, wherefore hast thou despised and robbed the temple of Apollo?

How Esope was betrayed, and how he rehearsed to the Delphines the Fable of the Rat and the Frogge.

ESop hearing this, denied it. And forthwith they vnbound the male, within the which they found the cup of gold: and they went and shewed it before the people. And Esop considering and seeing their malice and wickednesse, and knowing that he could not escape, began to weepe and to be sorrowfull for his fortune. And one of his friends named Demas, seeing Esop thus weeping, comforted him, saying thus: Haue good courage and reioyce thy selfe. And anon the Delphines went and concluded, that they (as a sacrilegier worthy to receiue a villanous kind of death) should take Esop, and cause him to bee led to the toppe of a high mountaine, for to be throwne downe from thence head-long. When Esope knew their sentence, he rehearsed to them this Fable, for to withdraw them from their malice saying, When peace was among all beasts, the Rat and the Frog loued much each other, and the Rat called the Frog to come to dine with her. The Rat said to the Frog, eate of the meate which pleaseth thee best. And when they had eaten enough, the Frogge said to the Rat: Come with mee, and thou shalt fare well at thy supper: and to the end thou maist the better passe the riuer, thou shalt binde thy selfe to my foote. The Rat

agreed, and anon the Frogge lept into the water, and drew the Rat after her. And as the Rat was neere drowned, he said to the Frogge, Wrongfully thou makest me to suffer death, but they that abide alive shall auenge this misdeed on thee. And as they were thus drawing, the one toward, and the other backward, a Kite seeing the debate and strife betweene them, tooke them both together and ate them. In like manner ye make me dye wrongfully: but Babylon and Greece shall auenge mee vpon you. But yet for all this the Delphines would not let Esop goe, but instead of death they drew and pulled him shrewdly, and in the best manner that hee could, he defended himselfe against them.

How Esope died miserably.

AND as Esope was thus fighting against them, he escaped out of their hands, and fled into the Temple of Apollo but all that profited him nothing, for by force and strength they drew him forth of the temple, and then they ledde him whereas they ment to put him to death. And Esop seeing himselfe to vitupered, said vnto them: My Lords, dread you not your god Apollo? he shall auenge mee on you. Notwithstanding, for all he could say, they brought him to the place where he should dye: and seeing hee could not escape from them, hee began to them this Fable. There was a woman which had a daughter that was a virgin and a foole: the mother prayed oft to her gods, that they would give to her daughter wit and reason. Her daughter was once in the temple, and heard what she said in her prayers: and anon the maide went into the field, & saw a man which filled

led a sacke full of corne, she came and asked him what he did, and he said: faire daughter, I put wit into this sacke: and shee said againe, alas my friend, I pray thee that thou wilt put some wit into my body, my mother shall pay thee well for thy labour. Then hee tooke her and put his wit into her belly, and took her maiden-head from her: and full glad shee returned home to her mother and said to her, Mother, I haue found a faire young man, which hath put witte into me: and her mother hearing these words, waxed full of sorrow, and said: My daughter, thou hast recouered all thy wit, but the wit which thou hadst thou hast lost. Likewise to them he rehearsed another Fable. There was a husbandman which from his youth to his old age had neuer been in the fields, nor neuer came into any city; hee prayed his master that hee might once see the city, and they sent him in a cart which was drawne with Asses, and said to him, prick well the Asses, and they shall leade thee to the City: and after he had pricked them, there arose a great tempest, wherewith the Asses were sore fouled, so that they left their way, and tooke another way, and drew the cart vpon a mountaine top, so that both hee and the cart fell downe to the foote of the hill. And as he saw himselfe falling, he said to Iupiter on this manner, Ah Iupiter, if I offend thee, must I therefore dye so miserably? I am more grieued at these foule and inutile asses by whom I must receiue death, then if they were faire and good horses. Euen so it fareth with me, for of good men and iust I should not be put to death, but of you which are euill. And as they were come to the place for to cast downe Esope,

he told them another fable in this manner. A certaine man was enamoured of his daughter, whom by force he deuoured, and she said vnto her father, ah Father thou art an euill man that hast done to mée such a shame, for rather I should haue suffered this crime of a hundred other men then of thee: semblably it is of mée, for I had rather suffer death of other men then of you. So they threw him downe from the top of the hill and thus he died miserably.

How the Delphines sacrificed to their gods, edified a temple for to please them for the death of Eſop.

AND after, when Eſop was put to death, it fell that in their Citie ran a great pestilence and famine, insomuch that they lost all their wits, and for this cause they sacrificed to their god Apollo, to the end to please him for the death of Eſop, and became that vniustly and wrongfully they put him to death, they made and edified a temple, and when the Princes and great Lords of Gréece had tidings how the Delphines had put Eſop to death, they came to Delph to punish them that had put Eſop to death.

Thus endeth the life of Eſope.

Heere beginneth the Prologue of the first Booke.

ROmulus the sonne of Tibere of the Citie of Antique, greeting. Eſop a man of Greece, subtile and ingenious, teacheth in his Fables how men ought to gouerne themselues. And to the end that he might shew the life and customes of all manner of men, he inuiteth the Birdes, the Trees,

Trees, and the beasts speaking: to the end that man may know wherefore the Fables were found; in the which he hath written the malice of euill people, and the arguments of Improbes. He teacheth also to be humble and for to vse good words, and many other faire examples, rehearsed and declared hereafter. The which I Romulus haue translated out of Greeke into Latine, the which if you reade, they shall sharpen thy wit, and giue thee cause of ioy and mirth.

The first Fable of the Cocke and the precious stone.

AS a Cocke once did seeke his liuing in the dunghil, he found a precious stone, to whom the Cock said, Ha faire stone and precious, thou art here in the filth; and if hee that desireth thee had found thee as I haue done, hee would haue taken thee vp, and set thee in thy first estate, but I in vaine haue found thee, for nothing haue I to do with thee, ne good I may do to thee, ne thou to me. And this fable Esop proposeth to them that read this booke: for by the Cocke is vnderstood a foole, which careth no more for wisdome, then the Cock did for the precious stone: and by this stone is vnderstood this booke.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

OF the innocent and of the shrew, Esop rehearseth this fable. It was so that a Lambe and a Wolfe both had thirst, and went both to the riuer to drinke, the Wolfe dranke aboue, and the Lambe beneath: and as the Wolfe saw the Lambe drinking, he said with

with a high voice, Knaue why hast thou troubled my water which I should now drinke of? Ah my Lord, sauing your grace, the water commeth from you toward me. Then said the Wolfe, hast thou no shame ne dread to curse me? The Lambe said, My Lord by your leaue. Then said the Wolfe againe: It is not fyue weekes past since thy father did as much. And the Lambe said I was not then borne. And the Wolfe said againe: thou hast eaten my Father: the Lambe said I haue no teeth. Then said the Wolfe thou art well like thy father, and for this sinne and misdeede thou shalt dye. The Wolfe then tooke the Lambe and ate him. This fable sheweth, that the euil man careth not by what maner he may robbe and destroy the good and innocent man.

Of the Rat and the Frogge.

NOw it was so that the Ratte went on Pilgrimage, and came by a Riuer, and demanded helpe of the Frogge for to passe ouer, and then the Frogge bound the Rats foote to her foote, and swam into the midst of the Riuer, and as they were there, the Frog abode still, with an intent to drowne the Rat. In the meane while, a Kite perceiuing it, tooke them both away. Wherefore that man that thinketh deceit, deceit shall come to him.

Of the Dogge, and the Sheepe.

OF quarrellers which euer be seeking occasion to doe some harme to the good, Esop giueth vs this fable. There was sometimes a Dog which demanded of a Sheepe a loafe of bread that hee had borrowed of him. The sheepe answered, that hee neuer borrowed any of him. The Dog made her to answer

swer it before a Judge. And because the sheep denyed the debt, the dog brought with him false witnesse, to witte, the Wolfe, the Kite, and the Sparhawke. When the witnesses should be examined and heard, the Wolfe said to the Judge, I am certaine and remember wel, that the dogge lent her a loafe of bread: the Kite said, she received it to present my person: and the Sparhawke said to the sheepe, why denyest thou that which thou hast taken and received? thus was the poore sheepe vanquished. Wherefore the Judge commanded her that she should pay the Dog, and to that end, she should doe away before winter her fleece of woll to pay the same. Thus was the poore sheepe dispoiled. In such manner the euill and hungry people, by their great vnthankfulnesse, robbe and spoile poore folkes.

Of the Dogge and the piece of flesh.

He that coueteth other mens goods, he oft loseth his owne, whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable. In time past there was a dog which went ouer a bridge, and held in his mouth a piece of flesh, & as he passed ouer the bridge, he perceiued the shadow of his owne selfe, & of his piece of flesh within the water: and he weening that it had beene another piece of flesh, forthwith thought to haue taken it: and as he opened his mouth, the flesh fell into the water, and thus he lost it. Right so is it with many a one, for when they thinke to robbe other, they leese that which they haue of their owne.

Of the Cow, the Goate, and the Sheepe.

It is accounted for a common saying among men, that the seruant should not presume to eate any plums

plums with his Lord. For to the poor it is not good to haue partage and deuision with him which is rich and mighty, whereof Esope rehearseth such a Fable. The Cow, the goate & the sheepe, went once a hunting, and tooke with them the Lion, & chased a Hart, and when they came to part it, the Lyon said: My Lords, I let you to wit, that the first part is mine, because I am your Lord: the second, because I am stronger then ye be: the third, because I ran more swiftly then ye did: & whosoeuer toucheth the fourth part, he shall be my mortal enemy. And thus he tooke from them the Hart. Wherefore this fable sheweth that the poore should not keepe fellowship with the mighty, for he is neuer faithfull to the poore.

Of the Theefe and the Sunne.

NO man is changed by nature, but an euill man may well haue a worse issue then himselfe. Esope hereof telleth vs a Fable. A theefe held the feast of his wedding, and his neighbours came where the feast was kept, and did worship to the theefe: and a wise man seeing that the neighbors of the thefe were ioyfull and glad, said to them, Ye make ioy and gladnesse of that whereof ye should weepe, take heed then to my words, and vnderstand your ioy. The Sunne would once be married, but all the nations of the world were against him, and prayed Iupiter that he should keepe the Sunne from wedding. Then Iupiter demanded of them the cause why they would not haue him to be married: one of them said to Iupiter, thou knowest well there is but one Sunne, and yet he burneth vs all, and if he be married and haue any children, they shall destroy all mankinde: there-

fore

fore this fable sheweth, that we ought not to reioyce when we are in euill company.

Of the Wolfe and the Crane.

He that doth any good to an euill man, sinneth as Esop saith, for of the good done to the euill, commeth no profit, wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. A Wolfe ate and deuoured a sheepe, of whose bones he had one in his throate, which hee could not get out, and sore it grieued him. Wherefore the Wolfe prayed the Crane, that he would draw out of his throat the bone. And the Crane put downe his long neck into his throat, and drew out the bone, whereby the Wolfe was whole. Then the Crane demanded of him her reward. And the Wolfe answered, thou art right vnkinde and canst no good, remembrest thou not what I might haue done to thee: for when thou haddest thy necke within my throate, if I would I might haue bit it off. By this fable it appeareth that no good comes from an euill body.

Of two Bitches, how one logded the other in time of littering.

Be not hasty to giue credit to the tales of flatterers, for by sweet words they deceiue good people, whereof Esop telleth vs this fable. There was a Bitch vpon a time, which would faine litter and be deliuered of her yong ones, and came to the habitation of another Bitch, and prayed her by sweete words, that shee would lend her a place where shee might litter her yong ones. And that other Bitch lent to her, her bed and her house, weening that shee had therein done well. And when the bitch had littered, the good bitch said to her, that it was time that

thee should goe and depart out of her house; and then the other bitch and her yong dogs ranne vpon her, and bit her, and cast her forth of her owne house. In this maner many a one for doing good hath hurt and damage.

Of the Man and the Serpent.

THere is no good gotten by helping an euill person, for he that helpeth such, shall surely be ill rewarded for his labour: and he that saueth a theefe from the gallowes prouideth an enemy for himselfe: wherefore to withstand such. Esop rehearseth vnto vs this fable: There was sometime a man which found a Serpent within a Mine, and by reason of the great frost in the Winter, the Serpent was hard and almost dead for cold, wherefore the good man pitied her, and tooke her vp, and bare her into his house, and laid her before the fire, insomuch that she came againe to her former strength and vigour. And as soone as shee was thus reuiued, shee began to cry and hisse about the house and to trouble the good wife and her children. Wherefore the good man would haue had her out of the house: but when hee thought to haue taken her, she sprung about his necke and had almost strangled him. Euen so it fareth with them that doe good to wicked people, for in stead of loue and kindnesse, they shall haue malice and enuy.

Of the Lyon and the Asse.

OF them that mocke others, Esope rehearseth this fable. There was an Asse which met with a Lyon, to whom he said: My brother God saue thee; and the Lyon shaked his head, and had great paine to withhold his courage from deuouring the Asse,

Asse. But the Lyon said to himselfe, It behoueth not the teeth of so noble a Lord as I am, to bite such a foule beast. For he that is wise, must not hurt the foole, nor heede his words, but let him goe.

Of two Rats.

FArre better is it to liue in pouerty, then to liue richly beeing euer in danger: whereof Esope rehearseth this fable. There were two Rats, whereof one was great and fat, and held him in the celler of a rich man, and the other was poore and leane. On a day this great Rat went to sport him in the field, and mette by the way the leane Ratte, of the which he was receiued as well as he could into his poore caue or hole, and gaue him of such meate as he had. Then said the fat Rat, come thou with mee, and I shall giue thee other meate. Ye went with him into the Towne, and both entred into the rich mans celler, which was full of goods, and when they were there, the great Rat presented and gaue to the poore Ratte diuers daintie meats, saying vnto him: Be merrie and make good cheere; and as they were thus ioyfully eating, the butler came into the celler, and the great Rat ran into his hole, but the poore Rat wist not whether to flee, but hid him behind the doore with great feare and trembling, and the butler turned againe and saw him not. And when he was gone, the fat Rat came out of his hole, and called the lean Rat, which was yet in feare, and said: Come hither, and feare not to fill thy belly: but the poore Rat said, for very loue let me goe, for I had rather eate corne in the field and liue securely, then to eate dainty fare in such feare as thou doest here in this place. And there-

therefore it is better to liue poorely and ſurely, then to liue richly, and without aſſurance.

Of the Eagle and the Foxe.

The puiſſant and mighty muſt doubt the feeble, as Eſope rehearſeth to vs a fable. There was an Eagle which came where yong Foxes were, and toke away one of them, and gaue it to his yong Eagles to feede them with. The Foxe went after him and prayed him to reſtore it againe: But the Eagle ſaid he would not, for he was ouer him Lord and maſter: Then the Fox full of ſubtilty and malice, began to put together a great aboundance of ſtraw, and laid it vnder the tree where the Eagle and her yong birds were, and kindled it with fire, and when the ſmoake and the flame began to riſe vpward, the Eagle fearing the death of his yong birds, reſtored to the Foxe her yong one.

Of the Eagle and the Rauen.

He that is well and ſurely garniſhed, yet by falſe counſell may be betrayed, as Eſop telleth vs ſuch a fable. An Eagle was ſometime vpon a tree, which held in his bill a Nut which he could not breake: the Rauen came vnto him and ſaid, thou ſhalt neuer breake it vntill thou flie as high as thou canſt, and then let it fall vpon the ſtones; and the Eagle did ſo, and by that meanes loſt his Nut. Thus many haue been deceiued through falſe counſell.

Of the Rauen and the Foxe.

They that bee glad and ioyfull at the praiſing of flatterers, oft times doe repent them, whereof Eſope rehearſeth to vs this Fable. A Rauen which was vpon a tree, held in his bil a peece of cheeſe, which the

the Fore desired much to haue: wherefore he went and praised him in this manner, O gentle Rauen, thou art the gentlest of all other birds, for thy feathers be so faire, so bright, and shining, and canst also well sing; if thou hadst thy voice cleere and small, thou wouldest be the most happy of all other birds. The fowle which heard the flattering words of the Fore, began to open his bill for to sing, and then the cheese fell to the ground, and the Fore tooke it vp and ate it. And when the Rauen saw that for his owne glory he was deceiued, hee wared heauy and sorrowfull, and it repented him that he had beleeued the Fore. Wherefore this fable teacheth vs, that we ought not to be glad or reioyce in the words of false and vnfaithfull folke, nor to beleeue flatterers.

Of the Lyon, the wilde Bore, the Bull and the Asse.

When a man hath lost his dignity or office, hee must leaue his audacity or hardines, to the end that hee bee not hurt and mocked. Wherefore Esop sheweth such a fable. There was a Lyon which in his youth was very fierce and cruell, and when he was come to age, there came to him a wild Bore, which with his teeth rent and burst a great piece of his body, and auenged the wrong that the Lyon had done to him before time. After came vnto him a Bull, which smit and hurt him with his hornes: also an Asse came, which smote him in the forehead with her feete in most scornfull manner. And then the Lyon began to weepe, saying within himselfe in this manner, When I was yong and strong, euery one dreaded and doubted mee, but now I am olde and

ſæble, and neare my death, none ſetteth ought by me, but of euery one I am abuſed: and becauſe that I haue loſt my vigour and ſtrength, I haue alſo loſt my dignitie and worſhip. Therefore this fable ſheweth how we muſt be meeke in proſperitie, leſt we be ſcorned of all men in our aduerſitie.

Of the Aſſe and the yong Dog.

NO man ought to meddle with that which he cannot doe. Wherefore Eſope rehearſeth ſuch a fable, of an Aſſe which was in the houſe of a Lord, which had a little Dog which he loued well, and eate vpon his table. And the little Dog fawned and leapt vpon his gowne, and to all them that were in the houſe he ſhewed his loue: wherefore the Aſſe was enuious, and ſaid in himſelfe, If my Lord and his ſeruants loue this miſcreant beaſt that ſheweth loue towards them, by all reaſon they muſt loue mee if I ſhew kindneſſe towards them: and therefore from henceforth I will take my diſport, and make ioy and play with my Lord and his ſeruants. And as the Aſſe was in his thought and imagination, it happened that hee ſaw his Lord entering into the houſe. The Aſſe then began to dance: and to make cheere, and to ſing with his ſweete voyce: and approching towards his Lord, leapt vpon his ſhoulder, and began to kiſſe and licke him. The Lord then began to cry out with a loude voyce, and ſaid, Let this foule whoreſon that hurteth me ſo ſore be well beaten and put away. Then the Lords ſeruants tooke great ſtaues, and began to ſmite vpon the poore Aſſe, and beate him ſore that he had no more courage to dance or leape vpon his Maſter.

Of

Of the Lyon and the Rat.

THe mighty and puissant must forgiue the feeble, for oft the little may well giue aide and help vnto the great; whereof Esope reheatseth such a fable. of a Lyon which slept in a forrest, and the Rats disporting them about him, it happened that they went vpon the Lyon, whereat he awaked, and with his claw hee tooke one of them: When the Rat saw her selfe thus taken, shee said vnto the Lyon: My Lord I pray you pardon me, for little shall you winne by my death, and I thought not to displease you. Then thought the Lyon with himselfe, that it were no worship to put her to death, wherefore he forgaue her and let her goe. After this, it hapned that the same Lyon was taken in a snare, whereupon hee began to cry and make sorrow: and when the Rat heard him cry, he approached, and demanded what he ayled? And the Lyon said: Seest thou not how I am taken and bound with this line? Then said the Rat, My Lord I will not be vnkinde, but shall euer remember your great mercy toward mee, and withall, if I can I shall now helpe you. The Rat then began to bite the cord, and so long gnawed thereon, that the cord brake in sunder, and the Lyon escaped.

Therefore this Fable teacheth, how that a mighty man ought not to despise the little or meane, for hee that cannot hurt by his strength may giue helpe by his diligent endeauour.

Of the yong Kite, and his Mother.

HE that euer doth euill, ought not to haue trust that his prayer should bee heard. Of which matter Esop reheatseth this fable. There was a Kite

which was sicke, in so much that he had no trust to recouer his health. And as hée saw himselfe weake and feeble, he prayed his mother that she would pray vnto her gods for him. His mother answered him, My son, thou hast greatly offended and blasphemed the gods that now they will auenge them on thee, for thou praiest not to thē for pitty nor loue, but for feare & dread: for he which leadeth an euill life, & in his dealing is obstinate, ought not to haue hope to be deliuered of his euill. For when one is fallen into extreme sickneſſe, then is the time come that he must be paied according to his deeds: for he that offendeth other in his prosperity, shall find few friends when hée falleth into aduersity.

Of the Swallow, and other Birds.

HE that beléeueth not good counsell, shall not faile to be euill counselled, wherefore Esope rehearseth to vs this fable following. A Plowman sowed Linséed, & the Swallow séeing that of the same Linséed, men might haue nets and gins, went & sayd to all other birds: Come ye all with me, and let vs plucke vp this, for if we let it grow, the labourer shall make gins and nets to take vs all: but all the birds dispraised her counsell. Then the Swallow séeing this, went and harboured her selfe in the plowmans house. And when the flare was growne & pulled vp, the labourer made ginnes and netts to take birds, wherewith he tooke euery day diuers of those birds, and brought them home to his house. Which the Swallow séeing, said, I told you of this before but you would not be warned by me.

The end of the first booke.

The

The Prologue of the second Booke.

ALL manner of fables are found to shew men what they should ensue and follow, and also what they ought to leaue and flee; for Fable is as much to say in Poetry, as words in Theologie. And therefore I write fables, to shew the good conditions of good men: for the Law is giuen for trespassers and misdoers: and because the good and iust be not subiect to the Law, as we finde and reade of the Athenians, which liuing after the law of Nature, and also at their liberty, would needs haue a King for to punish all euill: but because they were not accustomed to be enformed, when any of them was corrected and punished, they were greatly troubled when their new King executed any Iustice: because that afore that time, they had neuer bene vnder any mans subiection, it was grieuous to them to be in seruitude, wherefore they were sorrowfull that euer they had demanded any King. Against the which Esope rehearseth this fable following.

The first Fable is of the Frogges and of Iupiter.

NO thing is so good as to liue iustly and at libertie, for freedome and liberty is better then any gold or siluer: whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable: Diuers frogs were in ditches and ponds at their owne liberty, they all together with one consent made request vnto Iupiter, that hee would giue them a King, and Iupiter thereof began

to marueil, and for their King he cast them downe a great piece of wood, which with the fall therof made a great sound in the water, whereof they had great dread and feare; and after as they approched to their King for to make to him obeysance, and perceiued that it was but a piece of wood, they turned againe to Iupiter, praying him earnestly that he would giue to them another King. Then Iupiter gaue to them the Heron to bee their King. Then the Heron entered into the water, and ate them one after another. And when the Frogs sawe that their King did so deuoure them, they began to weepe to Iupiter, and to say vnto him: Right high and mightie Iupiter, wee pray thee to deliuer vs from the throate of this Tyrant, which eateth vs one after another. And then said Iupiter to them, the King which ye haue demanded shall be your Master. Wherefore, when men haue that which is conuenient, they ought to be ioyful and glad, and he that hath libertie, ought to keepe it well, for nothing is better then liberty, for liberty should not be sold for all the gold and siluer in the world.

Of the Doues, the Kite, and the Sparhawke.

HE that putteth himselfe vnder the safegard or protection of the euill, shall aske helpe of them in time of need, and get none, according to this present fable of the Doues which requested a Sparhawke to be their King, for to keepe them from the Kite, and when the Sparhawke was made King ouer them, he beganne to deuoure them: Then the Doues said among themselues, that better it were for

for vs to suffer of the Kite, then to be subiects vnto the Sparhawke, and to be martyred as we be, but hereof we be well worthy, for we our selues are the onely cause of this mischiefe. Wherefore it is good wisdome for men to thinke well what will be the end, ere they begin any thing.

Of the thiefe and the Dog.

IF a man giue any thing, he that receiueth it, ought to take heede to what end it is giuen, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a theefe that came on a night into a mans house for to haue robbed him, and the good mans Dogge began to barke at him, and then the theefe did cast at him a piece of bread: and then the dog said to him: thou castest this bread for no good will, but onely to the end that I should hold my peace, to the intent that thou maist rob my Master; and therefore it were not good for mee, that for a morsell of bread I should lose my life, wherefore goe thy way, or else I shall awake my master and all his houshold. The dogge then began to barke, and the thiefe fledand thus by couetousnesse many haue receiued great gifts, which haue caused them to lose their heads. Wherefore it is good to consider, and looke well to what intent the gift is giuen, to the end that none may be betrayed by gifts, neither ought any for gifts to worke treason.

Of the Wolfe and the Sow.

A Man ought not to beleeue all that he heareth, whereof Esope rehearseth such a Fable, of a Wolfe which came towards a Sowe, which kept and made sorrow for the great paine that she felt, because she was great with Pig. And the Wolfe came

to her, saying: My sister; make the young pigs secure: for ioyfully and with good will I shall serue and help thee. And the sow then said to him, go forth on thy way, for I haue no need of the helpe of such a seruant: for as long as thou shalt stand here. I shall not deliuer me of my charge: for thou desirest nothing else but to haue them and eate them. The Wolfe then went his way, and anon the Sow was deliuered of her pigs: but if she had beléeued him, she had a sorrowfull birth. And thus he that foolishly beleeueth foolishly it happeneth to him.

Of the mountaine that shooke.

RIght so it happeneth, that he that shaketh, hath dread and is fearefull; whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs such a fable, of a hill which began to tremble and shake, because of the Mole that delued. And as the folke saw that the earth began to shake, they were sore afraid, and durst not come nigh the mountaine, but when they knew it was long of the Mole, their doubt and dread was turned to ioy, and they began all to laugh. Therefore men ought not to beleeue all folke which be full of great words: for some men will greatly feare where no danger is.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

THe birth causeth not a man so much to get some friends, as doth the goodnesse, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable, of a Wolfe which saw a Lambe among a great herd of Goates, the which Lambe sucked a Goate, and the Wolfe said to him: this Goate is not thy mother, goe and seeke her at the mountaine, for she shall nourish thee more sweetly and more tenderly then the Goate will: and the Lambe

Lambe answered him: This Goate nourisheth mee in stead of my mother, for she leaueth to me her paps sooner then to any of her owne children, and yet more better it is for me to be here among these Goates, then to depart from hence, and to fall into thy throat and be deuoured. Therefore he is a fole, which being in freedome or surety, putteth himselfe in danger of death: for better it is to liue hardly in surety, then sweetly in perill and danger.

Of the old Dog and his Master.

MEn ought not to dispraise the ancient, nor to put them backe, for if thou bee young, thou ought est to desire greatly to come to bee old, also thou ought est to praise the actes or deedes, which they haue done in their young age, whereof Esope rehearseth to vs such a fable. There was a Lord which had a dog, the which in his youth had beene of good kind: as namely, to chase and hunt, and to haue great lust to runne and take the wilde beasts. And when this dogge was come to old age, and that hee could no more runne, it happened once that he let goe and escape from him a Hare, wherefore his Master was wroth and angry, and in great rage began to beat him. Then said the dogge vnto him, My Master, for good seruice thou yeeldest me euill: for in my young age and prosperitie, I serued thee right well, and now that I am come to my old age, thou hatest and settest me backe. Remember, I pray thee, how that in my young age I was strong and lustie, and now when I am old and feeble, thou settest nothing by me. Therefore, whoso doth any good in his youth, in his old age he shall not continue in the

vertues

vertues which he possessed in his youth.

Of the Hares, and the Frogs.

MEN say commonly, that as the time goeth, so much folkes goe, whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, that he which beholdeth the euill of other, must haue patience of the euill which may come vpon himselfe. For sometimes as a hunter chased through the fields and wood, the Hares began to flee for feare, and as they ran, they passed through a meddow full of Frogges, and when the frogges saw the Hares run, they began also to run and flee as fast. Then one of the Hares seeing them so fearefull, said to his fellowes: let vs be no more so fearefull, for we be not alone in dread, but all these frogs be in doubt as well as we: therefore we ought not to despaire, but trust and hope to liue, and if a little aduersitie come vpon vs, we must endeauour to beare it patiently, for the time will one day come, that we shall be out of all feare and danger. Therefore in the vnhappy and vnfortunate time, men ought not to distrust, but euer to be in hope, that a time of better hap will come: euen as peace commeth after warre, and faire weather after raine.

Of the Wolfe and the Kid.

GOod children ought to keepe the commaundements of their parents and friends, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Goate which had littered her yong Kidde, and hunger tooke her, so that shee would haue gone into the fields for to haue eaten some grasse, wherefore shee said to her young Kid. My childe, beware that if the Wolfe come hither to eate thee, that thou open not

the

the dooze to him. When the Goate was gone, the Wolfe came to the dooze: and the Kidde answered him, Go hence euill and false beast, foz well I see thee through the hole, that to haue mee thou faineſt the voyce of my mother, and therefoze I shall keepe me wel from opening the doze. Thus good children ought to marke and lay vp in their hearts the precepts of their parents, foz many a one is lost and vndone foz lacke of obedience.

Of the poore Man and the Serpent.

He that applies himselfe to do other men harme ought not to thinke himselfe secure, whereforе Esop reheatseth this fable. There was a Serpent which came into the house of a poore man, and lined of that which fell from the poore mans table, foz the which thing there hapned great foztune to this man, and he became very rich. But on a day this man was angry against the Serpent, & tooke a sword, and smote at him, whereforе the Serpent went out of the house, and came no more thither againe. A little after, this man fell againe into great poverty, and then he knew, that by foztune of the Serpent hee was become rich, whereforе it repented him that he had driuen away the Serpent. Then he went and humbled himselfe to the Serpent, saying: I pray thee that thou wilt pardon mee the offence that I haue done thee. And the Serpent said: Seeing thou repentest thee of thy misdede, I forgiue thee: but as long as I shall liue, I shall remember thy malice: foz as thou hurtedst mee once, so maist thou againe. Wherefore that which was once euill, shall euer so be held, men ought therefore not to insult ouer him, of whom

whom they receiue some benefit, nor yet to suspect their good and true friends.

Of the Hart, the Sheepe, and the Wolfe.

A Promise which is made by force and for feare, is not to be kept. Whereof Esope rehearseth this following fable. An Hart in the presence of a Wolfe, demanded of a Sheepe that she should pay a bushel of corne, and the Wolfe commanded the Sheepe to pay it. And whn the day of payment was come, the Hart demanded of the Sheepe the corne. And the Sheepe said to him. The couenants and promises which are made by force & dread, are not to be kept, for it was force to me being before the Wolfe, to promise and grantt o thee, that which thou neuer lentest to mee; therefore thou shalt haue nothing of me. Wherefore it is good sometimes to make promise of some small things, to withstand greater losse: for the things that are done by force, haue no fidelity.

Of the bald man and the fly.

OF a little euill may come a greater. Whereof Esope rehearseth this fable. There was a Fly which pricked a man vpon his bald head, and when he would haue smitten her, she flew away, and thus he smot himself, whereat the Fly began to laugh: and the bald man said, euill beast, thou deseruest well thy death, I smote my selfe, whereat thou diddest mocke me, but if I had hit thee, thou haddest surely beene slaine. Therefore men say commonly, that at the harme of other men, none ought to laugh or scorne, but enuious and scornefully words procure many enemies, for which cause it oft hapneth, that a few bad words cause great danger.

Of

Of the Foxe, and the Storke.

NO man ought to doe vnto others, that which hee would not should bee done vnto himselfe. Of which Esope rehearseth this fable, to wit, of a Fox which requested a Storke to supper, and the Fox put the meate vpon a trencher, the which meate the Storke might not eate, whereof she tooke great displeasure and departed to her lodging: and because the Fox had thus deceiued her, she bethought her selfe how shee might beguile the fox: for as men say, It is merry to beguile the beguilers. Wherefore the Storke prayed the Fox to come and sup with her, and the Storke put his meate within a glasse, and when the fox would haue eaten thereof hee could not come by it, but onely licked the outside of the glasse, because he could not reach into it with his mouth. And then the Storke said vnto him, take part of such fare as thou gauest mee, So the fox right shamefully departed thence. Thus with the same rod which he made for other, he was beaten himselfe. Therefore he that beguileth other, must looke to be beguiled againe.

Of the Wolfe, and the mans head.

SOme haue more worship then witte, whereof Esope rehearseth a fable of a Wolfe, which found a dead mans head, the which he turned vp and downe with his foote, and said: Ah how faire and pleasant hast thou been, and now thou hast in thee neither wit nor beauty, also thou art without voyce and without thought: and therefore men ought not to behold the beauty and faireneſſe of the body, but the goodneſſe of the courage: for sometimes men giue glory and worship

worship to some that haue not deserued it.

Of the Iay, and the Peacocke.

NOne ought to weare another mans rayment, and to be proud thereof as it were his owne, whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs this fable. There was a Iay which decked & arrayed her selfe with the feathers of a Peacocke, and when hee was so deckt, hee went and conuersed among the Peacocks: and when he was with them, he began to dispraise his fellowes. And when the Peacocks knew that hee was not of their kind, they anon plucked off all his feathers, and beate him in such manner that no feathers abode vpon him, so he fled away all naked and bare: and when his fellowes saw him, they said: What gallant commeth here? Where be his feathers which hee had a while agoe? hath he no shame to come into our company? Then all the birds came vnto him and beate him, saying: If thou hadst beene content with thine own rayment, thou had stnot been put to this shame. Therefore it is not good to weare other mens clothes, for many there are which brag much of that which is not their owne.

Of the Mule, and the *Fly*.

SOme make a great labour which haue no might, whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable. There was a Carter which had a Cart that a Mule drew forth, and because that the Mule went not fast enough, the Fly said to the Mule, Ah lazie Mule, why goest thou no faster? I shall so greatly pricke thee, that I shall make thee goe lightly. The Mule answered, God keepe the Moone from the Wolues, for I haue no great dread ne feare of thee, but I dread and doubt

for

for my Master that is vpon me, which constraineth mee to fulfill his will, and more I ought to dread and doubt him, then thee that are nought and of no value ne might. Wherefore men ought not to feare them which are not to be feared.

Of the Ant and the Fly.

TO make boast and vanting is but vaine glory whereof Esop rehearseth this following fable. there was an Ant and a Fly which striued together, to wit, which was the most noble of them both: The Fly said to the Ant, come hether Ant, Wilt thou compare thy selfe with me, that dwell in the Kings palace, and eate and drinke at his Table: and also I kisse both King and Quéene, and the most faire maidens: thou poore and miscreant beast, art euer within the earth. Then the Ant answered the Fly saying: Now know I well thy vanity and folly, for thou vaunteſt thée of that whereof thou shouldeſt be dispraised, for in all places where thou flyeſt, thou art hated and put out, and liueſt in great danger, and as soone as Winter commeth thou shalt dye; but I shall abide aliue within my chamber or hole, whereas I eate and drinke at pleasure: for the winter shall not forgiue thee thy misdéede but shall slay thee. Thus he that will mocke and dispraise other, ought first to looke well into himselfe, for it is more wisedome to see and amend our owne faults, then to loke into other mens.

Of the Wolfe, the Foxe, and the Ape.

THe man that once falleth into any euill fault, he shall liue with dishonor, and in suspition euer after. And howbeit that in aduenture hée purpose to

not

do some profitable thing to some other, yet he should not be trusted nor beleeued, whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs this Fable following. There was a Wolfe that said the Fore was an arrant theefe, and a robber of poore people: and the Fore answered and said that he lyed, and that he was a good and true man, and that he did much good and profit. And then the Ape, which was set as a Iudge betweene them, gaue sentence, and said thus to the Wolfe: Come hither, thou hast lost all that which thou demandest: And thou Fore, I beleeue well that thou hast vsurped and robbed some thing, howbeit that thou denyest it in iustice: but because that peace may bee betwixt you both, ye shall part together your goods, to the end that none of you both haue any whole part: For hee that is accustomed to robbe and steale, with great paine he may abstaine or refraine himselfe from it, for one beguiler euermore beguileth another. And because that the Ape found them both guiltie and suspitious, he made them accord and part halfe by halfe. Wherefore, they that be accustomed to any defraud, deceit, or falshood, shall euer liue in great mislike and suspition.

Of the Man, and the Wesill.

MEn ought well to consider the courage and thought of him that doth good, and to the end wherefore he doth it, whereof Esope rehearseth a fable, of a man which tooke a Wesill which chased after Rats within his house: And after when he had taken the Wesill, he would haue killed her. When the poore Wesill saw the wrath and fury of the man, she cryed vnto him for mercy, saying thus:

My

My Lord, I require and pray thee that thou wilt pardon me, and that thou wilt reward me for the great seruice I haue done thee, for euer I haue chased the Rats out of thy house. And the man said: thou didst it not for the loue of me, but onely thou hadst done it to fill thine owne belly: for if thou hadst done it for the loue of me, I would haue rewarded thee for it, but because thou didst it not for to serue me, but to let and damage me, for what the Rats could not eate, thou bearest away, and being wared fat of mine owne bread, thou must render and giue to me all the fatnesse which thou hast gotten here, for he that robbeth must be robbed, Iuxta illud: pillatores pillabuntur. For it sufficeth not to do well but men must haue a good intent in doing of it. Wherefore I will not pardon thee, seeing thou deseruest no mercy, but presently put thee to death.

Of the Oxe and the Frogge.

The poore man ought not to compare himselfe to him that is rich, as Esop sheweth to vs by this present fable. There was a Frog in a medow which espied a Dre hard by in pasture, and perceiuing the Dre great and her selfe little, she began to swell against the Dre, and said to her children, Am not I now as great as the Dre, and as mighty? and her children said, nay mother, for when we behold the Dre, you seeme nothing like in bignesse to him. At these words the frogge began more to swell. And when the Dre saw the pride and folly of the frogge, he trod vpon her with his foote, and brake her all to pieces. Therefore it is not good for the poore to compare himselfe with the rich, but rather to content

himselfe in his calling: lest by striuing beyond his power, he purchase not onely the ill will of the wealthy, but worke withall his owne woe & ouerthrow.

The end of the second Booke.

The third Booke of the subtile Fables of Esope.

The first Fable of the Lyon and the Shepheard.

They that are mighty and puissant, ought not to be vnmindfull of the benefits done vnto them by the poore and simple, and ought also to requite them as much as in them lyeth. As this Fable of Esope approoueth and sheweth vs, of a Lyon which ran after a beast, and as he ran, a thorne entred into his foote, which afterward hurt and grieued him greatly. Wherefore he might not goe; but as well as he could, he came to a shepheard which was keeping sheepe, and began to flatter him with his tayle, shewing his foote which was hurt: The shepheard was in great feare and dread, and cast before the Lyon one of his sheepe, but the Lyon demanded no meate: for more he desired to haue some helpe and ease of his foote then any meate. And when the Shepheard saw the wound, hee with his needle subtilly drew the thorne out of his foote, and tooke out of the wound all the rotten flesh, and corruption, & anointed the wound with such sweete ointments, that anon the Lyon was whole. And for

to

to render thankes to the Shepheard. the Lyon kissed his hand, and went againe to the wood. And within a while after, it hapned that the Lyon was taken, and conueyed into the Citie of Rome, and was put among the other beasts for to deuoure the misdoers. It hapned also in processe of time, that the same shepheard committed an offence, for which he was iudged to be deuoured of beasts, and as soone as hee was cast in among them, the Lyon knew him, and began to behold him, and licked him with his tongue and kept him from all other beasts. Then knew the shepheard that it was the same Lyon which hee had made whole, & that hee would now recompence him for the good which he had done to him. Whereof all the Romanes were greatly abashed, and would also know the cause of it, why he was so cherished by the wild beast. And when they knew the cause, they gaue leane to the Shepheard to goe home, and sent the Lyon againe to the Forrest. Men ought therefore to render thankes to their benefactors, for ingratitude is displeasing to God, and hurtfull to man.

Of the Lyon and the Horse.

EAch one ought to shunne dissimulation, for none ought to faine himselfe otherwise then he is, as Esope rehearseth vnto vs by this Fable. There was a Lion which saw a Horse eate grasse in a meadow, & being desirous to deuoure the Horse, hee went to him and said: God keepe thee my brother, I am a good Leech, and because thou hast a sore foote, I will helpe thee. The Horse knowing well the Lions euill intent, said: I am glad brother of thy comming hither, I pray thee now that thou wilt make my foote

whole: and then the Lyon said to the Horse, let me see thy foote; and as the Lyon looked on it, the Horse smote him on the forehead, in such wise that he brake his head, and the Lyon fell to the ground, being hurt so grieuously that he could hardly rise againe. And being vp againe, he said to himselfe: Surely I am well worthy of this, for he that seeketh euill, euill commeth to him: and because that I dissembled, and fained my selfe to be a Phisicion, whereas I should haue shewed my selfe a great enemy, I therefore haue receiued a meete reward. Therefore euery one ought to shew himselfe plainly as he is.

Of the Horse and the Asse.

He that is fortunate and happy, knowes not how soone hee may be poore and miserable. And therefore none ought to despise the simple, but rather to thinke himselfe may become as meane and poore. Whereof Esop sheweth this fable. There was a great Horse which was well harnessed and apparelled and his saddle richly furnished with gold, this Horse met with a poore Asse sore laden in a narrow way: and because the Asse turned not backe, incontinent the horse said to him, Vnmannerly beast, hast thou no shame, beareſt thou no reuerence vnto thy Lord? Who holdeth me now, that I with my foote breake not thy head, because thou giuest not place for me to passe by thee? The poore Asse answered neuer a word, but was sorry: and after that, he would haue beaten him, whereat the Asse still held his peace as wise and sage, and so the Horse went his way. And within a while after, it befell that fortune turned her wheele so downe, that this faire horse became old,

leane,

leane, and sicke, and out of all prosperitie, and his master commanded he should be had into the Towne, and in stead of his rich saddle, men should put on his backe a panier for to beare dung to the fields. Now it hapned that the Asse which was in a meddow eating grasse, perceiued the Horse, and knew him well, whereof being greatly abashed, hee marueiled much how hee should become so poore and leane. And as the Asse went toward him, hee said, Ha fellow, where is now thy faire saddle, and thy rich bridle garnished with gold? how art thou now become so leane? what hath thy pride profited thee, and the great presumption which once thou didst shew to me? thinke now how thou art leane and vnthrifty, and how thou and I bee not of one office. And now the miserable and vnhappy Horse was abashed, and for shame looked downeward, and answered neuer a word: For all his felicity was then cleane turned into aduersitie. Wherefore, they that be in felicity, ought not to mocke and scorne them that bee in aduersitie, for many haue beene rich, which now are in great pouertie and neede.

Of the Birds and of the Beasts.

One man cannot serue two Maisters, which bee contrary one to the other, as Esope sheweth in this present fable. On a time the Beasts made great warre against the Birds, and they fought often together. And the Bat fearing the wolues, and that the beasts would vanquish them, thee thought in her mind and said to her selfe, We are not able to ouercome the Beasts, wherefore I will saue my life and goe take part with them. And when the battaile

was ordained on both sides, the Eagle began to enter into the battel of the Beasts by such a strength, that with the helpe of the other birds he got the field, and vanquished the beasts, wherefore the Beasts made peace with the Birds, and were all of one accord and one will: and for the treason that the Bat had made shée was condemned neuer to sée the day and neuer to flie but onely by night: and also she was dispoiled of all her feathers. So hée that will serue two Maisters, contrary one to another, is not to bee accounted iust nor true: and they which leaue their owne maisters to serue a stranger. which is enemie to him, are worthy to be punished. For the Gospell saith, no man can serue both God and the diuell.

Of the Nightingale and the Sparhawke.

HE that oppresseth the innocent, shall haue an euill end: whereof Esope rehearseth this Fable following. There was a Sparhawke which put her selfe within the nest of a Nightingale, where hee found the young birds. The Nightingale came and perceiued it, wherefore she prayed and required him to haue pitty on her young birds: and the Sparrehawke answered and said: If thou wilt that I grant thy request, thou must sing sweetely after my will. And the Nightingale began to sing sweetly, not with the heart, but with the throate onely, for shee was filled with sorow that otherwise shee might not sing. The Sparhawke said to the Nightingale, this song pleaseth me not, and then he tooke one of the young birds and deuoured it. And as he would haue deuoured another, there came a Hunter, which did cast a Net vpon the Sparhawke, and when he would haue flowne

flowne away, he might not, for he was taken. And therefore he that hurteth the innocent, is worthy to dye an euill death, as Cain did for killing Abel.

Of the Wolfe and the Foxe.

FOrtune helpeth both good and euill folke, and all them which she helpeth, no euill happeth vnto them. But they that set their malice against Fortune, be subuerted & ouerthrowne by her. Whereof Esope rehearseth a fable. There was a Wolfe which had gathered together a great prey of meate, that he might the better liue deliciously, whereof the Fore had great enuy, and that he might steale some of that meate, he went into the caue of the Wolfe and said to him: My gossip, because that it is long since I saw thee, I am in great heauinesse and sorrow, and also because a long time we haue not bin conuersant together. When the Wolfe knew the malice of the Fore, he said, Thou art not come hither to see how I fare, but to rob mee. For which words the fore was angry, and went to a Shepheard, and said: If thou wilt be auenged on the Wolfe which is enemie to thy heard, this day shall I put him into thy hands. And the Shepheard answered the for thus: If thou doe as thou saiest, I shall pay thee well for it. Then the for shewed him the hole wherein he was, and the Shepheard incontinent went thither, and with a speare he killed the Wolfe. By this meanes the Fore was well refreshed with the Wolues victuals, but as he returned home, he was deuoured of dogs: wherefore he said to himselfe, because I haue done euill, euill commeth to me: for sinne returneth to his Maker, and euill to him that euill doth.

Of the Hart and the Hunter.

MEn sometime prayse that, that should be dispraised, and oftentimes men blame and dispraise that which should be prayised, as Esope sheweth in this following fable. It happened that a Hart upon a time dranke in a fountaine or Well, and as hee dranke he saw his head which was horned, wherefore he praised much his hornes. And as he looked on his legges, which were long and small, hee dispraised and disliked them. And as he was drinking, hee heard the voyce and barking of dogs, wherefore hee would haue fled into the Forrest to haue saued himselfe: and as he saw the dogs so neere him, he would faine haue entred within a bush hard by, but hee might not, for his hornes kept him out; and when hee saw that he might not escape, he began to say within himselfe, I haue blamed and dispraised my legges, which haue beene to me profitable, and haue praised my hornes, which be now the cause of my death. Men ought not therefore to dispraise the thing that is profitable, nor praise the the thing that is vnprofitable. They ought to praise and loue the Church of Christ, and all the commandements of the same. They ought also to dispraise and flee all sinne and vice, which is both euill and damnable.

Of the Goddesse Iuno, and Venus, with other women.

BEfore the Gods and Goddesses, men must euer praise chastitie, for it is worshipfull and an honest thing to any man, to hold him well content alone. But Venus for her disport, & to driue away the time, would interpret the saying of the Hens, wherefore shee

shee demanded a Hen that was in her house. But at this time I shall keepe my tongue and speake no further thereof, for many wise men haue seene and read all this booke, and vnderstand all the matter of it. And because it is little and honest, and that wee all be bound to keepe Ladies in their worship and honour, and also in euery place wee ought to praise them, wee will now cease to enquire further of this matter and history, which wee shal leaue in Latine for great Clarkes, and in speciall for them that will spend their time to study and read the glosse of Esope.

Of the Knight and the Widdow.

THe woman that liueth in this world without reproach and blame, is worthy to bee praysed greatly, wherof Esop rehearseth a fable of a man and a woman which loued much each other. It happened then by Atropos or death (which wee all must suffer) that the said man died, and as men would haue borne him to his graue, which was without the towne, his wife made great sorrow, and wept pittiously: and when he was buried, shee would remaine still vpon the graue, and made her a little lodge or house thereupon, and out of that lodge shee would neuer depart for any faire words, neither for any gift, nor for displeasure of her Parents. Now it befell in the towne that a misdoer was condemned to be hanged, and to the end hee should not be taken downe from the gallowes, commandement was giuen that a knight should keepe him, and as the knight kept him, hee had a great thirst, and perceiuing the lodge of the said woman, he went vnto her, and desired her to giue him some drinke, and she with good heart

heart gaue him drinke, and when he had drunke, he returned toward the gallowes. This knight came another time to the woman to comfort her, and three times he did so. And as he was thus going and comming, doubting of no body, in the meane while the hanged man was taken from the gallowes: and when the knight was come to the gallowes, and saw his dead man gone, he was greatly abashed, & not without cause, for he was charged with him vpon paine of death, that if he were taken away, this knight should suffer death: and incontinent he went to the said woman, and kissed her feete, and lay before her as he had beene dead. And she said, my friend, what wilt thou that I doe for thee? Alas, said hee, I pray thee that thou helpe and counsell me at my need, for now because I haue not kept my theefe well, I must suffer death. And then the woman said, Haue thou no dread my friend, for I will finde a meanes to deliuer thee, for we wil take my husband and hang him in stead of the theefe. Then began she to delue, and tooke out of the earth her husband, and at night, she hanged him on the gallowes in stead of the theefe, and said to the knight: Right deare friend, I pray thee keepe it secret, for we doe it secretly. Thus dead men haue some that sorrow for them, but the sorrow is soone gone and past. They that be aliue haue some which dread them, but their dread ceaseth when they be dead.

Of the yong man and the common harlot.

Of the common and foolish woman, Esope rehearseth to vs a fable: There was a woman named Thais, which because of her fained loue, was

the

the losse and death of many young men. To one that had beat her often before that time, she said: My right deare loue and friend, I suppose that of many a one I am desired and loued: neuertheleſſe, I shall set my loue on thee alone, wherefore I pray thee that thou wilt be mine, & I shall be thine, for all thy goods I care not, but for thy sweete body. But he that very well knew the fantasie of the woman, answered her right swetly, thy will and my will be both one; for thou art the I most desire, and she that I shall loue all the time of my life, if thou no more deceiue me, but because thou hast deceiued me in times past, I am the more afraid of thee. But notwithstanding this, thou art much pleasant and faire in the sight of me. Thus the one beguiled the other: for the loue of a common harlot is not to be trusted: thou oughtest therefore to thinke, that the common woman alwaies loueth thy siluer more then thee.

Of the Father and the euill sonne.

The good and wise father, ought to chastise his children in their young age, and not when they are old, for then it is much difficulty to make them bow, as Esope rehearseth to vs a fable, of a Father which had a Sonne, the which did nothing that he ought to haue done, but euer was going and playing in the towne. And the Father for the misrule of his sonne, brawled euer, and beat his seruants, telling vnto them a fable of a Plowman or labourer, which bound a Bull by the hornes to an Ore: The Bull would not be bound, but smote strongly at the man with his feete, and lanched at him with his hornes. At the last, being bound, the labourer said to them,

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I haue ioyned and bound you both together, to the end that you should doe some labour. But I will that the least of you two, that is, the Bull, be learned and taught of the greatest, which is the Ore; for I must (said the labourer to himselfe) binde them thus together, to the end that the Bull which is young, fierce, malicious and strong, smite, ne hurt no body, whereof great danger might come to me. But because I know well that the Ore shall teach and governe him well, I haue bound them both together. Whereby this fable sheweth vs, that the father ought both to teach and giue good example to the child, and to chastise him while hee is young: for hee that loueth his child, will chastise him.

Of the Serpent and the File.

The Authour, that is to wit, Esope rehearseth vnto vs a Fable of two euils, saying, a Serpent entered sometime within the Forge of a Smith, for to search for some meate for her dinner, it hapned that she found a File, which she began to gnaw with her teeth. Then said the File to her, if thou doe bite and gnaw me, yet shalt thou doe me no hurt, but thou shalt hurt thy selfe, for by my strength all the yron is plained, and therefore thou art a fole to gnaw on me: for I tell thee that no euill may hurt ne damage another euill, and so of the hard: for one hard shall not breake another, nor two enuious men shall not both ride vpon one Asse. Wherefore he that is mighty, must loue him that is as mightie.

Of the Wolues and the Sheepe.

Such men as haue a good head and good captaine, ought not to leaue him, for hee that leaueth, repenteth

penteth afterward, as Esope rehearseth to vs this Fable, of the sheepe which had warre and dissention with the Wolues, and because that the Wolues were too strong for the Sheep, the Sheepe tooke for their helpe the Dogs & the Weathers also, and then was the battaile of the sheep great and strong, and they fought so victoriously against the Wolues, that they put them to flight. And when the wolues saw the strength of their aduersaries, they sent an Embassadour toward the Sheepe for to haue peace among them, the which Embassadour said vnto the sheepe in this manner: If ye will giue vs the Dogs, we shall sweare vnto you, that we shall neuer keepe ne hold warre against you. And the Sheepe answeared: If ye will sweare hereto, wee shall be content. And thus they made peace together, but the wolues killed the Dogges which were Captaines of the sheepe: wherefore, when the little young wolues were growne to their age, they came to each part, and contrined and assembled them together, and all with one accord and will said to their ancestors & fathers: Wee must eate vp all the sheepe. Their fathers answered and said vnto them: wee haue made peace with them: Neuertheless, the yong wolues brake the peace and ran fiercely vpon the sheepe, and their fathers after them: and thus because that the sheepe had deliuered the dogges to the wolues which were their Captaines, they were all destroyed. Therefore it is good to keepe well a good captaine, which may at neede succour and helpe: For a true freind at neede, is better then gold; for if the sheepe had kept the dogges with them, the wolues had not deuoured them.

them. Wherefore it is a sure thing to kepe well the love of his Protector and good friend.

Of the Man and the Wood.

He that giveth ayde and helpe to his enemy, is the cause of his owne death, As Esope rehearseth by this fable. There was a man which made an axe, and after he had made it, he asked of the trees a handle for it, and the trees were content to give him one. And when he had made fast the handle to the Axe, he began to cut and throw downe to the ground all the trees: wherefore the Oake and Ash said: if we be cut it is but right and reason, for of our owne selfe we be cut and throwne downe. And that it is not good for one to put himselfe into the danger and subiection of his enemy, as thou maiest see by this present fable. For men ought not to give the staffe by which they be beaten.

Of the Wolfe and the Dogge.

Libertie or freedome is a pleasant thing, whereof Esope rehearseth a fable. A Wolfe and a Dog by chance mette together. And the Wolfe demanded of the Dogge how he came to be so fat? the Dog answered: I haue well kept my Lords house, & haue barked at the theues which came into my masters house: Wherefore hee and his men give me plenty of meate, whereof I am faire and fatte. And the Wolfe said to him, It is well said my brother, and surely seeing thou farest there so well, I haue a very great desire to dwel with thee, to the intent that thou and I may both dine together. Well, said the Dogge, come then with me, if thou wilt be at thy ease as I am, and hane no dread, nor doubt of any thing.

Then

Then the Wolfe went with the Dogge, and as they went by the way, the Wolfe beheld the Dogs necke which was all bare of haire, and demanded of the dog and said, My brother, why is thy necke so bare? and the dog said, it is by reason of my great coller of yron, to the which daily I am fastned, and at night I am vnbound for to keepe the house the better: then said the wolfe to the Dogge, I that am in liberty, will not be put in such subiection to be bound & néed not, and therefore if thou beest accustomed therets, and likest well of it, continue so still and spare not, for I will not leaue my liberty to fill my body. By which we learne, that liberty is more to bée regarded then wealth.

Of the hands, the feete, and the belly.

HOw shall one doe any good to another, which can doe no good to his owne selfe? As thou maiest sée by this Fable of the féete and the hands, which sometime had great strife with the belly, saying, all that we may or can get by our labour, thou eatest it, and yet thou doest no good, wherefore thou shalt haue no more of vs, but we wil let thee dye for hunger. And when the belly was sore hungry, shée began to cry out, alas I dye for hunger, giue mee somewhat to eate: and the féet and hands said, thou getteſt nothing of vs. And because that the belly might haue no meate to sustaine it, the conduits thorow the which the meate passeth, became small and narrow, and within few dayes after, the féete and hands through the féebleneſſe which they felt, would then haue laboured to get meate for the belly, but it was too late: for by too long fasting, the conduits were

were ioyned together, and therefore the limbs might do no good to other, that is to wit, the belly. And he that gouerneth not well his belly, with great paine hee doth hold the other limbes in their strength and vertue. Wherefore a seruant ought to serue well his Master, to the end that his Master hold and keepe him honestly, and to receiue good reward of him when his Master shall see his faithfulnesse.

Of the Ape and the Foxe.

OF the poore and the rich, Esop rehearseth a fable, of an Ape which prayed a Foxe to lend him some of his tayle, for to couer his buttocks therewith, saying thus to him, What doth thy long taile auaile thee? it auaileth thée nothing, but letteth thée: and that which letteth thée may be good for me. The for said I would that it were yet longer. For rather I would see it all foule and dagled, then it should beare to thée any such honour as to couer thy foule buttocks therewith. Giue not therefore away the thing that thou hast neede of, lest thou want it afterward thy selfe.

Of the Merchant and the Asse.

MAny bée tormented after their death, wherefore men ought not to hasten their owne death, as Esop rehearseth by this fable of a Merchant which ledde an Asse laden into the market: and to be soone at market he beat the Asse and sore pricked him, wherefore the poore Asse wished and desired his owne death, weening that after his death he should bée at rest. And after hée was well beaten he dyed. Then his Master made him to bée slaine, and of his skinne hée made Tabours which

bé

be euer beaten. And thus what paine so euer men haue during their life, they ought not to desire nor with their death. For many there be that haue great paine in this world, that shall haue greater in another world: for a man hath no rest for death, but for his merits.

Of the Hart and the Oxe.

ONely by flying none is assured to escape the danger from which hee flyeth, as is shewed by this fable. There was a Hart which ranne before the dogges, to the end that hee should not be taken, and he fledde into the first towne that he found, and entred into a stable wherein were many Oxen, to whom he declared the cause why hee was come thither, praying them that they would saue him. And the Oxen said thus to him: Alas poore Hart, thou art among vs euill rescued, thou wouldest be more sure in the fields, for if thou be perceiued, or seene of our Master, certainly thou art but dead. Alas for pittie said the Hart, I pray you that you will hide me within your racke, that I be not perceiued, and at night I shall goe hence, and shall put my selfe into a sure place. Then one of the seruants came to giue hay to the Oxen, and when hee had done he went away, and saw not the Hart, whereat the Hart greatly reioyced, weening that he had escaped the perill of death, wherefore he rendred thanks to the Oxen. But one of the Oxen said to him, It is easie to escape out of the hands of the blind but it is hard to escape from the hands of them that may well see. For if our Master come hither, which hath aboue an hundred eyes, certainely thou art but dead, if he perceiue thee. And

if he ſée thée not certainely thou art ſaued, and ſhalt goe forth on thy way ſurely. The Maſter within a ſhort while after went into the ſtable: and after hee had demanded to ſée the hay which was before the Oxen hee went himſelfe and felt of it, and as he felt the Hay he felt alſo the hornes of the Hart with his hands, and to himſelfe he ſaid, what is this that I feele heere? And being afraid, called his ſeruants, and aſked how that Hart came there? And they ſaid to him: ſurely my Lord we cannot tell. Then their Lord was glad, and made the Hart to be taken and ſlaine, and the Lord made a great feaſt for to haue him eaten. It hapneth therefore oftentimes, that hee which ſuppoſeth to fly, is taken ere he bee aware, wherefore men ought alwaies to keepe themſelues from doing ſuch things whereby they needs not fly.

Of the Fallace and the Lyon, and of their conuerſation.

TO bee conuerſant among men of euill life, is a thing very perillous, as Eſope rehearſeth by this preſent fable. There was a Lyon ſtrong and mighty, which made himſelfe King for to haue the greater renowne and glory. And from thenceforth he began to change his conditions & cuſtome, ſhewing himſelfe courteous. and ſwearing that he would hurt no beaſts, but would keepe them ſafe againſt euery one: Afterward, of this promiſe hee repented him, becauſe it was difficult and hard to change his owne kinde. And therefore when he was angry, he, ledde him with ſome ſmall beaſts into a ſecret place. for to eate and deuoure them. And hee demanded if his

his breath stanke or not, and they said it stanke; and all they which answered not, he presently killed and deuoured them. It hapned among the rest, that bee demanded of the Ape whether his breath stanke or not, and the Ape answered no, and said withall that it smelleth as swete as any Bawme; and then the Lyon had shame to slay the Ape; but he found a subtile fallhod for to put him to death. He fained himselfe shortly after to be sicke, and commanded that all his Leeches and Surgions should come before him. When they were come, he commanded them to loke on his vrine, and when they saw it, they said, to him, Sir, be of good comfort and ye shall soone be whole: and the Lyon said, alas, right faine would I eate of an Ape. Certainely saide his Phisicions, that is very good meate for you. Then was the Ape sent for, and notwithstanding that he worshipfully spake and answered to the King, the King made him to dye, and deuoured him. It is perillous therefore and very harmefull to be in the fellowship of a Tyrant, for though it be against all equity and conscience, his will must stand for a law, and whatsoeuer he commandeth, must be put in practice, though it tend to the ruine of his best subiects.

The end of the third booke.

The firſt Fable maketh mention of the Fox and the Raiſins.

HE is not wiſe which deſireth any thing that he may not haue, as reheatſeth this preſent fable, of a Fox, which beheld the Raiſins that grew vpon a Vine, which he greatly deſired. And when he ſaw that hee could get none, he turned his ſorrow into ioy, and ſaid, theſe Raiſins be ſowre, and if I had ſome I would not eate them. Therefore he is wiſe that faineth not to deſire the thing that he would willingly haue.

Of the Weſill and the Rats.

IT is better for a man to haue witte then ſtrength as Eſope ſheweth by this Fable. There was an old Weſill which might no more take Rats, wherefore ſhe was often hungry, & thought that ſhe would hide her ſelfe within the flore to take the rats which came to eate it. And as the Rats came to the flooze, ſhe tooke and ate them one after another. And as the oldeſt rat of all perceiued her malice, he ſaid thus in himſelfe, certainely I ſhall keepe me well from thee, for I know well thy malice and falſhood. Therefore he is wiſe that eſcapeth the malice of his enemy by wit rather then by force.

Of the Wolfe the Shepheard, and the Hunter.

MAny folke ſhew themſelues good in wordes, which are full of great fantaſies, as Eſope ſheweth by this Fable. There was a Wolfe which

which fledde from a Hunter, and as he fled he met a Shepheard, to whom he said, my friend, I pray thee tell not to him that followeth me, which way I am gone: and the shepheard said to him, feare nothing I shall shew to him another way, when the Hunter came, he demanded of the shepheard which way the Wolfe went. The shepheard both with his head and eyes shewed the hunter the place where the wolfe was, and with his hand and tongue shewed the contrary. But the Wolfe perceiuing well all the false dealing of the shepheard, fled away and escaped. And within a while after, the shepheard met the wolfe, and said to him: pay mee for that I kept thee secret. And the Wolfe answered, I thanke thy hands and tongue, & not thy head ne eyes, for by them I should haue beene betrayed if I had not fled away. Therefore men must not trust him that hath two tongues, for such are like the scorpion, which healeth with his tongue and hurteth with his taile.

Of the goddesse Iuno, the Peacocke, and the Nightingale.

EVery one ought to be content with nature, and such goods as God hath sent them, to vse them iustly, as is rehearsed vnto vs by this fable: There was a Peacocke which came to the goddesse Iuno & said vnto her, I am very heauy and sorrowful, because I cannot sing as well as the Nightingale, for euery one mocketh and scorneth mee because I cannot sing. Then Iuno to comfort him, said: Thy faire forme and beauty is of farre greater worth, and more to be praised then the song of the Nightingale, for thy feathers and thy colours be resplendishing, like

vnto the precious Emerald, and there is no Bird whose feathers are so faire and beautifull as thine be: the Peacocke notwithstanding said to Iuno, all this is nothing saing I cannot sing. Then Iuno spake againe thus to the Peacocke to content him, saying, This is the disposition of the gods, which hath giuen to euery one a seuerall property and vertue, as they thinke meete themselues: and as they haue giuen to thee faire beauty and goodly feathers, so haue they giuen vnto the Nightingale sweet and pleasant song, and to all other Birds their proper qualitie. Wherefore euery one ought to be content with that he hath, for the miserable couetous man, the more goods he hath, the more he desireth.

Of the Panther and the villaines.

EVery one ought to doe well to the stranger, and to forgiue the miserable, as Esope rehearseth by this fable following. There was a Panther which fell into a pit, & when the villaines or churles of the Country saw her, some of them began to smite her, and other said forgiue and pardon her, for she hath hurt no body; and there were other that gaue to her bread, and another that said to the villaines, beware you slay her not. And because they were all of sundry minds, euery one of them went home againe, weening that she should dye within the said pit, but by little and little she climed vp, and went her way. Within a while after, she hauing in memory the great iniury that had beene done to her, went againe to the place where she had beene sore beaten, and began to kill and slay all the beasts thereabout, and put the shepheard and swineheard, and other which kept beasts

beasts to flight, she likewise burnt their corne, and did many other euils there-about. And when the folkes of the Country saw the great damage that she did to them, they came toward her praying her to haue pitty on them. To whom shee answered in this manner, I am not come hither to take vengeance on them which haue had pitty on me, but only on them which would haue slaine mee. And for the wicked and euill folke I recite this fable, to the end that they hurt no body, for if the villaines had taken pitie, one as well as another of the poore Panther, when shee was in the pit, the foresaid euill has not hapned vnto them.

Of the Butcheers and the Weathers.

That linage or kindred which is different in diuision, shall not doe any thing lightly to their profit, as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Butcher which entred into a stable full of weathers, and when the weathers saw him, none of them said a word. The butcher tooke the first he found, then the weathers spake all together and said, Let him do what he will, and thus the Butcher tooke them all one after another saue onely one. And as he would haue taken him, the poore weather said, Iustly am I worthy to be taken, because I haue not holpe my fellowes: for he that will not helpe others, ought not to looke for helpe of others: wherefore vertue vnited is better then vertue separated.

Of the Faulconer and the Birds.

The wise ought euer to keepe good counsell, and in no wise ought they to doe the contrary, as rehearseth this fable of the birds which were ioyfull

and glad when the prime time came, because their nests were then couered all with leaues. Incontinent they beheld and saw a faulconer which dreſt and laid his laces and nets for to take them, and then they ſaid all together: yonder man hath pitty on vs, for when he beholdeth vs, he weepeth. And the Partrich which had often experimented all the deceits of the ſaid faulconer, ſaid to them: keepe ye all well from the ſaid man, for he ſeeketh nothing but the manner how to take you, and when he hath taken you, he wil eate & deuoure you, or elſe beare you to the market & ſel you: and as many as beleeued his counſel, were ſaued. Wherefore they that ſcorne good counſell, are worthy to fall into danger.

Of the true man, the Lyer and the Ape.

MAny men in time paſt, prayſed more the people full of leaſings then them that told truth, which thing raigneth with ſome vnto this day, as wee may vnderſtand by this preſent Fable, of a true man and a lyer, which went both together thorow the country, and ſo long they went together in their iourneyes, as they came to a Prouince of Apes, and the King of Apes made them to be taken and brought before him: he being ſet in his maieſty, like an Emperour, and all his Apes about him, as ſubiects be about their Lord, demanded of the Lyer and ſaid, Who am I; and the lyar flatterinsly ſaid vnto him, Thou art Emperour and king, and the faireſt creature that is vpon the earth. Then the King demanded of him againe: Who be theſe that be about me? and the lyar anſwered, Sir they be your knights and your ſubiects, to keepe your perſon and your

your realme. Then the King said, thou art a good man, I will that thou be my great Steward of my houshold, and that euery one beare to thee honour and reuerence. When the true man heard all this, hee said in himselfe, if this man for making of lyes be so greatly aduanced, then by great reason I shall bee more worshipped if I speake truth. Then the King asked the true man and said: Who am I, and all that be about me? then the true man answered: Thou art an Ape, & a beast right abominable, and all they which are about thee, are like vnto thee. Then did the King command he should be torne with teeth and clawes, and cut all in pieces. And therfore it happeth oft, that lyers be aduanced, and true men set low, yea many times for saying the truth, men leese their liues, which thing is against all iustice and equitie.

Of the Horse, the Hunter, and the Hart.

NOne ought to put himselfe in subiection, for to auenge him on other, for better it is not to submit himselfe, then to be submitted: as Esope rehearseth by this fable following. There was an Horse which enuied an Hart, because shee was fairer then hee. This Horse through enuy went vnto an Hunter, to whom he said in this manner: If thou wilt beleeue me, we shall this day take a good prey; leape vpon my backe, and take thy sword, and we shal chase the Hart: and thou shalt kill him with thy sword, and so thou maiest eate him and sell his skinne. And then the Hunter moued by auarice, demanded of the Horse saying, Thinkest thou indeede wee may take the Hart of whom thou speakest to mee? And the

the Horſe anſwered thus, Aſſure thy ſelfe of it, for hereto ſhall I put all my diligence and ſtrength, leape on my backe, and doe after my counſell: and then the Hunter lept vpon the Horſe, and began to runne him after the Hart; and when the Hart ſaw him come hee fled, but by reaſon that the Hart ran faſter then the horſe did, he eſcaped from them and ſaued himſelfe. And when the horſe felt himſelfe very wearie, and that he might no more runne, he ſaid to the hunter in this manner, light from my backe, for I may beare thee no more, and I haue miſſed of my prey. Then ſaid the hunter to the horſe, ſeeing thou art entred into my hands, thou ſhalt not yet eſcape from me thus, thou haſt the bridle in thy mouth, wherby thou maiſt be kept ſtill and reſtrained, and though thou wilt leape, the ſaddle ſhall keepe me, and if thou wilt caſt thy feete from thee I haue good ſpurres to conſtraine thee and make thee to goe whether thou wilt or no, where I will haue thee: therefore keepe thy ſelfe well, that thou ſhew not thy ſelfe rebellious vnto me. It is not good therefore for a man to put himſelfe in ſubiection to another, that thereby he may be auenged of his aduerſary, for whoſo ſubmitteth himſelfe vnder the might of another, is bound to doe his will.

Of the Aſſe and the Lyon.

GReat callers by their high and loud cry, ſuppoſe thereby to make folke afraid, as Eſope reheatſeth by this preſent fable. There was an Aſſe which ſometime met with a Lyon, to whom he ſaid: Let vs both goe vp to the top of a mountaine, and I ſhall ſhew thee how the beaſts be afraid of me: and the Lyon began to ſmile, and anſwered the Aſſe, goe

we my brother: and when they were vpon the toppe of the hill, the Asse began to cry, and the Fores and Hares began to flee. When the Asse saw them flee, he said to the Lyon, seest thou not how the Beasts dread and doubt me? The Lyon said, I had also been fearefull of thy voyce, if I had not knowne verily that thou art but an Asse. Wherefore men need not to doubt him which aduanceth himselfe to doe that hee cannot doe. Nether need men to feare a foole for his noise, nor his great voice.

Of the Hawke and other birds.

THe hypocrites make to God a beard of straw, as in this fable of a Hawke, which sometime fained that he would celebrate a natiuitie, or hold a very great feast, the which should be kept within a temple: and vnto this feast and solemnitie, he inuited and summoned all the small Birds, to which they came. And incontinent as they were all come to the feast, and entred into the temple, the Hawke did shut the gate, and put them all to death one after another. Wherefore this fable sheweth vnto vs, how we must keepe our selues from all them which vnder faire seeming haue a false heart, for those be hypocrites, and deceiuers of God and the world.

Of the *Fox* and the Lyon.

HE is well aduised that taketh warning by the perill of other men, as this fable sheweth, of a Lyon which sometime fained himselfe sicke, & when the beasts knew that the Lion was sicke, they would goe all to visit and see him as their King, and incontinent as the beasts entred into his house to see him, he deuoured them. And when the Fores were come

come to the gate for to haue visited the Lyon, they knew well the fallace and falshod of the Lyon, and saluted him at the entry of the gate, but entered not within: and when the Lyon saw that they would not enter into his house, he demanded of them why they would not come in. Then one of the Fores said to him. We perceiue well by the traces, that all those beasts which haue entred into thy house come not out againe, wherefore we thinke, that if we should once enter in, we should come no more out. He therefore is to be accounted wise, which taketh warning by other mens harmes.

Of the Asse, and the Wolfe.

FAith and truth from an euill man is seldome to be erpected. As Esop rehearseth by this fable, of a Wolfe which visited an Asse which was very sicke, the Wolfe began to feele and touch him, and demanded of him and said, My brother & friend, whereabout is thy sore? and the Asse said to him: euen in that place where thou touchest: And then the Wolfe faining to helpe, began to bite and smite him. Men must therefore beware of flatterers, for they say one thing, and doe another.

Of the Hedgehog and the three Kids.

THose that be yong ought not to mocke and scorn their elders, as Esope sheweth by this fable, of three little Goates which mocked a great Hedgehogge which fled before a Wolfe: and when he perceiued their scorning, he said vnto them, Ah poore soles, yee wot not wherefore I flee, if yee wist and knew the perill, yee would not mocke me. Wherefore, when men see the great and mighty be fearefull, the

the leſſe and feeble ought not to thinke themſelues ſafe and ſure: for when a towne is taken by hazard of warre, the whole country about ought to tremble and be afraid.

Of the Man and the Lyon.

MEn ought not to beleeue the Painter, but the truth and the deed. As men may ſee by this preſent Fable, of a man and a Lyon, which had ſtrife together, and were in great diſſention, for to witte and know which of them was more ſtrong. The man ſaid he was ſtronger then the Lyon, and for to haue his ſaying verified, ſhewed to the Lyon a picture, whereas a man had victory ouer a Lyon, and the picture of Samſon the ſtrong. Then ſaid the Lyon vnto the man, if the Lyons could make pictures as well as men, it ſhould be here ſhowne, how the Lyon had victory ouer the man, and now (quoth he) I ſhall ſhew thee the proofe hereof: then the Lyon ledde the man to a great pit, and there they fought together, but the Lyon caſt the man into the pit, and ſubmitted him to his ſubiection, ſaying: thou man, now knoweſt thou well which of vs two be the ſtronger, and therfore by the worke, the workeman may be knowne.

Of the Camell and the Fly.

HE that hath no might ought not to praiſe himſelfe, as Eſope ſheweth by this fable. It hapned that a Fly becauſe of the Cammels haire, lept to the backe of the Cammell which was loaden, and was borne of him all the day: & when they had gone a great way, & that the Cammell came to his Inne, and was put in the ſtable, the Fly leapt from him to the

the ground beſide the foote of the Cammell; and then ſaid to the Cammell, I haue pitty of thee, and am come downe from thy backe, becauſe I would no more be burdenſome vnto thee. And the Cammel ſaid to the Fly; I thanke thee, howbeit I am not ſore laden of thee. And therefore, of him which may not greatly hurt, little eſtimation is to be made.

Of the Ant, and the Creket.

NEceſſary it is for euery man to prouide for himſelfe in ſummer, ſuch things whereof he ſhall haue need in winter, as thou maieſt ſee by this preſent Fable. There was a Creket which in the winter time demaunded of the Ant ſome corne to eate. And then the Ant ſaid to the Creket, what haſt thou done all the ſummer laſt paſt? and the Creket anſwered, I haue ſung. Then ſaid the Ant, Of my Corne thou getteſt none: for if thou haue ſung all the Summer, goe dance all the winter. By which we learne, that there is a time ordained for labour, as well as a time for reſt. For hee that will not worke when he ſhould, ſhall want when he would not.

Of the Pilgrim, and the ſword.

ONe euill man may be cauſe of great perill and loſſe to many folkes. As Eſope rehearſeth by this preſent fable. There was a Pilgrime which by chance found in the way a ſword, and hee aſked of the ſword, what is hee that hath loſt thee? And the ſword anſwered to him, One man alone hath loſt me, but many a one I haue loſt. And therefore an euill man may well be loſt, but ere he be loſthee may well let many a one. For by an euill man, may come into a country many euils.

Of

Of the sheepe and the Crow.

NOne ought to doe iniury, nor despise the poore innocents or simple ones: As rehearseth this present Fable of a Crow, which set her selfe on the backe of a Sheepe. And when the sheepe had borne her a great while, she said to her, thou shalt keepe thy selfe well to set thee vpon a dogge. Then the Crow said to the sheepe, thinkest thou not poore innocent, but that I wot well with whom I play? for I am old and malicious, and my kinde is to harme all innocents, and to be a friend vnto the euill. Wherefore this Fable sheweth, that there be folke of such kinde as they will do no good worke, but onely let and hinder the innocent and simple.

Of the Tree, and the Reede.

NOne ought to be proud against his Lord, but to humble himselfe vnto him, as rehearseth this present Fable, of a great Tree which would neuer bow for any wind, and the Reede which was at his foot, bowed euery way euen as the winde pleased. Whereupon the Tree said to the Reede, Why doest thou not stand still as I doe? And the Reede answered, I haue not the might that thou hast. And the Tree said to the Reede proudly, then haue I more strength then thou. And anon after, there came a great wind which threw downe the said tree to the ground, and the Reede abode vp still. Thus wee learne hereby, that the proud ere they be aware are suddenly throwne downe, and the humble many times are exalted.

The end of the fourth Booke.

Here

Heere beginneth the fift Booke, whereof the firſt Fable is of the Mule, the Wolfe, and the Foxe.

MEn call many folke Aſſes that be very ſubtile and wiſe, and many thinke themſelues wiſe, which deſerue to bee accounted aſſes, as appeareth by this Fable: there was a Mule which ate graſſe in a meddow nære a great Forreſt, to whom came a Fore, which demanded of him and ſaid: What art thou? And the Mule anſwered, I am a beaſt. And the Fore ſaid, I doe not aſke that of thæ, but I aſke who was thy Father? and the Mule anſwered, My great father was a Horſe. And the Fore ſaid againe, I doe not aſke that, but onely that thou tell mee what is thy name. And the Mule ſaid, I know not, becauſe I was little when my father dyed: neuertheleſſe to the end that my name ſhould not bee forgotten, my father made it to bæ written vnder my left foote behind, wherefore if thou wilt know my name, looke vnder my foote. And when the Fore vnderſtood the falſhood of the Mule, hee went againe to the forreſt and met the Wolfe, to whom he ſaid: Ha miſcreant beaſt, what doeſt thou hære? come with me, and into thy hands I ſhall put a good prey to fill thy belly. Looke in yonder meddow, and there thou ſhalt finde a good fat beaſt, with that which thy hunger may bee ſatisfied. The Wolfe went preſently into the meddow, and finding there the Mule, hee ſaid vnto him in this manner: Who art thou? and the Mule

Mule answered the Wolfe, saying, I am a Beast. The Wolfe said to him, that is not the thing which I aske of thee, but tell me how thou art named. The Mule said, I wot not, but nevertheless, if thou wilt know my name, thou shalt finde it written under my left foote behinde. Then the Wolfe said, I pray thee shew it me, and the Mule lift up his foote and as the Wolfe looked thereon, the Mule gaue him such a stroake there-with on the fore-head, that almost the braines fell out of his head. And then the fox, which was behind a bow and saw all the matter, began to laugh, and mocke the Wolfe, saying: Foule beast, thou wottest well that thou canst not reade, wherefore euill therefore is come to thee, thy selfe being cause of it. For none ought to take vpon him the thing which he cannot doe, lest by shewing his ignorance he be willing to be mockt for his labour.

Of the Bore and the Wolfe.

There are some that presume for to be great persons; and dispraise their owne parents, which at the last doe become poore, and fall into great dishonour: as Esope sheweth by this fable. There was a Bore among a heard of Swine, and for to haue dominion and lordship ouer them, he began to make a great rumor, and shewed his great teeth to make the other swine afraid: but because they knew him, they set nought by him, wherefore he was much displeased; and went thence vnto the heard of Sheepe and Lambs. And when he was there, he began to make a great rumor, and shewed them his great teeth. And when the Lambes heard him, they were very much afraid, and began to shake for feare. Then said the

Boze within himselfe, Here is the place wherein I must abide and dwell, for here I shall be greatly worshipped, for euery one quaketh for feare of me. Then came the wolfe thither for to haue gotten some prey, and the lambes began to flee: but the boze as proud would not stir him, ne goe from the place, because he supposed himselfe Lord, but the Wolfe toke him, and bare him into the wood for to eate him. And as the wolfe bare him, it happened that he passed before the heard of swine which the boze had left, and when the boze perceiued and knew them, he cryed aloude and prayed them for Gods loue that they would help him saying that without their help he was but dead. And then the swine all with one consent, went and recoured their fellow, and slew the Wolfe. When the Boze was thus delinered, & saw himselfe among the swine, he began to haue shame, because he was thus departed and gone from their fellowshippe, and said to them, My brethren and friends, I am well worthy to suffer this paine, because I haue gone and departed from you. Wherefore, he that is well, ought so to keepe himselfe, for many by pride couet to be great Lords, and oft fall thereby into great pouertie.

Of the Foxe and the Cocke.

Oftentimes much speech hurteth, as rehearseth this Fable. There was a For which came to a Cock and said, I would faine know if thou canst sing as well as thy father could. And the Cocke shut his eyes and began to Crow and sing. And then the For caught him and carried him away. And the people of the towne cried & said, The For beareth away the Cocke.

cocke. Then the cock said thus to the Fox, My Lord, vnderstandest thou not that the people say, thou bearest away their cocke, tell to them that it is thine and not theirs. And as the Fox said, It is not yours but mine, the Cocke escaped from the fores mouth, and flew vp into a tree, and then the Cock said to the fore, Now thou liest, for I am theirs and not thine. And then the Fox began to hitte the earth both with his mouth and head, saying, Mouth thou hast spoken too much, thou mightest haue eaten the Cocke, had it not beene for thy many words. Thus we see that ouermuch talking letteth, and too much crowing smarteth. Keep thy selfe therefore from ouer many words, lest afterward it repent thee.

Of the Dragon and the Labourer.

NOne ought to render euill for good, and they that helpe, ought not to be hurt, as this fable sheweth, of a Dragon which was within a riuer, and as the riuer was diminished of water, the Dragon abode at the riuer, which was all dry, and thus for lacke of water he could not stirre him. A labourer or villaine came that way, and demanded of the Dragon, saying: what doost thou here? and the Dragon said, here I am without water, without the which I cannot moue, but if thou wilt bind me, and set me vpon thy Asse, and lead me into a riuer, I shall giue thee abundance of gold and siluer: and the villaine for couetousnesse bound him and led him into the riuer: and when he had vnbound him, hee demanded of him his salarie or payment. The Dragon said to him, because thou hast vnbound mee thou wilt be payde, and because that I am now hungry, I will eate thee: and

the villaine answered and said, for my labour wilt thou eate and devoure me? And as they striued together, the fore being within the Forrest, and hearing their questioning, came to him and said in this manner. Striue yee no more together, for I will accord and make peace betwixt you, let each of you tell to me his reason, for to weet which of you haue right. And when each of them had told his tale. The for said to the villaine, shew to me how thou vnboundest the Dragon, that I may giue thereof a lawfull sentence. And the villaine put the Dragon vpon his asse, and bound him as he did before. Then the for demanded of the dragon, held hee thee so fast bound as thou art now? and the Dragon answered, Yea my Lord, and yet more hard. And the fore said to the villaine, bind her yet more harder, for hee that well bindeth, well he can vnbind. And when the dragon was fast bound, the fore said to the villaine, beare him againe where thou didst first binde him, and there leaue him bound as he is now, and so he shall not eate and devoure thee. For he that doth euill, shall be rewarded with euill: and they that offer harme to the poore shall haue punishment from God.

Of the Foxe and the Cat.

MAny there be which aduance themselues, and thinke that they be wise and subtile, which bee starke fooles and know nothing, as rehearseth this present fable, of a fore that sometime mette with a Catte, to whom hee saide, My Gossip, God giue you good day. And the Cat said, My Lord, God giue you good life. And then the fore demanded of him:

my

my gossip, what canst thou doe? And the Cat saide vnto him, I can leape a little. & the fox said to him certainly thou art not worthy to liue, because thou canst doe nothing. And because that the Cat was angry at the fores words, he demaunded of the fox and said, Gossip what canst thou doe? A, thousand sundry wiles haue I said the fox, for I haue a sacke full of sciences and wiles, and I am so great a scholler that none can deceiue me. And as they were thus talking together, the Cat perceiued a Knight comming towards them, which had many Dogs with him, wherefore he said to the fox, my gossip, certainely I see a Knight comming hitherward, which hath with him many dogges, the which as ye know be our enemies. The fox answered. My gossip, thou speakest like a coward, and one that is afraid, let him come, and care not thou. And incontinent the dogges perceiued the Cat and the fox, and began to run vpon them: and when the fox saw them come, he said to the Catte: Let vs flee gossip, to whom the Cat answered: certainely gossip there is no need: neuertheleſſe the fox beleeued not the Cat, but fledde, and ran as fast as he could to saue him, and the Cat leapt vp into a tree and saued her selfe. Now shall we see who shall play best for to preserue and saue himselfe. When the Cat was vpon the tree, she looked about her, and saw how the dogges held the fox with their teeth to whom she cryed and said, O my gossip and subtile fox, of a thousand wiles that thou canst doe, let me now see one of them. The fox answered not, but he was killed of the dogges, and the Cat escaped. Wherefore the wise ought not to dispraise the

ſimple, for ſome are ſuppoſed to be wiſe, and yet are very fooles.

Of the Hee Goate and the Wolfe.

HE that is feeble, ought not to arme himſelfe againſt the ſtrong, as rehearſeth this fable, of a Wolfe which ſometime ranne faſt after a hee Goate, and the hee Goate for to ſaue himſelfe leapt vpon a rocke, and the Wolfe beſieged him. And after when they had dwelled there two or three dayes, the wolfe began to waxe hungry, and the goate to haue thirſt. And thus the Wolfe went for to eate, and the Goate to drinke. And as the Goate dranke, he ſaw his ſhadow in the water, and beholding his ſhadow, ſaide thus within himſelfe, Haſt thou ſo faire legges, ſo faire a beard, and ſo faire hornes, and haſt feare of the Wolfe? If it happen that he come againe, I will charge him well, and keepe him well, and hee ſhall haue no charge ouer me. And the Wolfe which held his peace, and harkned what hee ſaid, took him by one of his legges, ſaying thus: what words be theſe that thou dooſt ſay brother hee Goate? And when the goat ſaw that he was taken tardy, he thus anſwered the Wolfe, O my Lord, I ſay nothing, haue pitty on me, I know well that I haue offended: notwithſtanding, the Wolfe tooke him by the necke and ſtrangled him. Therefore it is a very great folly for thoſe that are feeble, to make any warre againſt the mighty.

Of the Wolfe and the Aſſe.

NOne ought to beleeue lightly the counſell of him whom he mindeth to hurt, as yee may ſee by this fable. There was a Wolfe which mette with an Aſſe, to whom hee ſayd, My brother, I am hungry,

hungry, wherefore I must néds eate thée. And the Asse answered him right gently. My Lord, with me thou maist doe what thou wilt, for if thou eatest me, thou shalt put me out of great paine: but I pray thée if thou wilt eate me, that thou vouchsafe to eate me out of the high way: for well thou knowest that I bring home raisins from the Vine, and the corne from the fields, also thou knowest that I beare home the wood from the Forrest, and when my Maister will edifie some building, I must goe fetch the stones from the mountaine, and also I beare the corne to the mill, and after I beare home the meale, and briefly I was borne in a cursed houre, for to all paine, and to all labour I am subiect: for the which I would not that thou shouldest eate mée here in the high way, for the great shame that might come thereof to mée: but I instantly require thée, that thou wilt heare my counsell, namely, that we go into the forrest, and thou shalt bind me by the brest as thy seruant, and I shall bind thée by the necke as my maister, and thou shalt leade me before thée into the wood whersoeuer thou wilt, to the end that there thou maiest more secretly eate me. To this the wolfe accorded, and said, I am willing to doe so. And when they were come into the forrest, they bound each other in the manner as is aforesaid. And when they were bound, the Wolfe said to the Asse, goe whither thou wilt, and goe before to shew the way, and the Asse went before, and led the wolfe into the right way of his maisters house. And when the wolfe began to know the way, hee said to the Asse: we goe not the right way. To the which the Asse answered, My Lord, say not so, for

certainly this is the right way. But for all that, the Wolfe would haue gone another way. Neuertheleſſe, the Aſſe led him to the houſe of his Maſter, and as his maſter and all his men ſaw the Aſſe drawe the Wolfe after him, and would haue entred into the houſe, they came out with clubs and ſtaues and ſmote on the Wolfe, and as one of them would haue ſmitten a great ſtroake vpon the Wolfes head, hee brake the cord wherewith he was bound, and ſo he eſcaped and ran away from them ſore hurt and beaten. And the aſſe for great ioy that ſhe was ſo eſcaped from the wolfe, began to ſing, and the wolfe which was vpon the mountaine, hearing the voice of the Aſſe, began to ſay to himſelfe: thou maieſt be merry and glad, but I ſhall kéepe thée well another time, that thou ſhalt not binde me as thou haſt done. And therefore it is great folly to beléeue the counſell of him whom men would hurt, and to put himſelfe in his ſubiection. He that hath béene once beguiled, muſt take héed another time, for hee to whom men purpoſe to doe ſome euill turne, when they haue him at aduantage, they muſt kéepe them on the ſurer ſide.

Of the Serpent and the Labourer.

THe author of this booke rehearſeth ſuch another fable, and of ſuch meaning as the precedent, that is to wit, that men ſhould not beléeue him vnto whom they haue done euill, ſaying: that ſometime in harueſt time a Labourer went to ſee his goods in the fields, the which met in his way a Serpent, and with a ſtaffe which he bare in his hand, ſmot the ſaid ſerpent, and gaue him ſuch a ſtroake on the head, that he almoſt ſlew him. Then the Serpent feeling himſelfe

selfe sore hurt, hée went from the man, and entred into his hole, & said vnto the labourer, O euill friend thou hast beaten me, but I warne thée, that thou neuer beléeue him vnto whom thou hast done any euil. Of which words the labourer made little account, and went forth on his way. It shortly befell, that this Labourer went againe that way for to eare his ground. To whom the Serpent said, O my friend, whither goest thou? and the Labourer said vnto him, I goe to eare and plow my ground. And he said vnto him, sowe not too much; for this yéere shall bée full of raine, and great abundance of water shall fall. But the labourer said, I beléeue not him to whom I haue sometime done any euill, and without moe words the labourer went forth on his way, and beleeued not the serpent, but made all his ground to be sowed with as much corne as he might. And the same yéere fell great store of water, wherefore the said labourer had but little corne, for the most part of the corne that he had sowne, perished because of the great raine. And the next yéere following, as the labourer passed by the hole of the foresaid Serpent, and went to sow his ground, the Serpent demanded of him, My friend whither goest thou? The labourer answered, I goe to sow my ground with corne and other graine, such as I hope shall bee necessary for mee in time to come. Then said the Serpent, My friend, sowe but little corne, for the summer nert comming shall be so hote, that by drinesse and heate, all the corne sowne in the earth shall perish: but beleeue not him to whom thou hast done any euill. And without any moe spéech the labourer went and thought of the words of the serpent,

serpent, and weening that the serpent had said so to deceiue him, he sowed as much corne and other grain as he might, and it hapned that the Summer next following was such as is aboue said, therefore the man was beguiled, for hee gathered the same yeere nothing. The next yeere following, the said labourer went againe for to eare his ground: and as the serpent saw him come, hee demanded of the labourer in this manner: My friend, whither goest thou? Then answered the labourer, I goe to eare my land. Then said the serpent, My friend, sow not too much, ne too little of corne and other graine, sow betweene both. Nevertheless, beleeue not him vnto whom thou hast done euill: and I tell thee that this yeere shall be more temperate and fertile of all manner of corne that thou sowest. The labourer had no sooner heard these words, but forthwith he went his way, and did as the serpent had said, and that yeere he gathered much good, because of the good disposition of the time. And on a day the same yeere, the Serpent met the same labourer comming from harvest, vnto whom hee said, Now say my friend, hast thou not found this yeere great plenty of good, as I told thee before? And the labourer answered, yea certainely, whereof I thanke thee. And then the serpent demanded of them remuneration, or reward. And the labourer demanded what he would haue, the serpent said, I demand of thee nothing, but only that to morrow in the morning thou send me a dish full of milke by some of thy children. And then the serpent shewed the labourer the hole of his dwelling, and said vnto him, Tell thy sonne that hee bring the milke hither,

but

but take heede to that the other, while I told thee that thou beleeuest not him to whom thou hast done euill. And anon after, when these things were sayd, the labourer went homward, and in the morning he tooke his sonne a dishfull of milke, and he carryed it to the serpent, and set it before the hole; and the serpent came out, and slew the child with his veneme. And when the labourer came to the field, passing by the hole of the said serpent, he found his sonne lying dead vpon the ground. Then the labourer began to cry with a loud voyce, as one full of sorrow or heauinesse, saying: Ha cursed & euill serpent, venimous and false traytor, thou hast deceiued me. A wicked and deceitfull beast, full of contagious euill, thou hast slaine my sonne. And the serpent said vnto him, I will well that thou know that I haue not slaine him sorrowfully, ne without cause, but for to auenge me of the hurt that thou hast done to me without cause, and hast not amended it. Remembrest thou not how oft I haue said vnto thee, that thou shouldest not beleeue him vnto whom thou hast done euill? Remember it now that I am auenged of thee. This Fable sheweth, how men ought not to beleeue or giue any credit to them to whom they haue done some harme in time past. For old hatred is soon renued, and malice will not be satisfied without working euill.

Of the Fox, the Wolfe and the Lyon.

He that hath beene endamaged by another, ought not to take vengeance by the tongue, in giuing iniurious words, because such vengeance is dishoneſt, as this present fable following sheweth. Some-

time

time there was a fore that ate fish in a riuer. It happened that the wolfe came that way, and when he saw the fore which ate with so great appetite, he began to say, my brother giue me some fish. And the fore answered him, Alas my Lord, it behoueth not that ye eate the relefe of my table, but for the worship of your person I shall counsell you well. Doe so much as get you a basket, and I shall teach you how ye shall take fish, to the end that ye may alwaies take some when ye be hungry. And the Wolfe went into the street, and stole a basket, and brought it with him, and the fore tooke the basket, and bound it with a corde at the wolfes taile, and when it was well bound, the fore said to the wolfe, goe you into the riuer, & I shall take heed to the basket. And the wolfe did as the fore bade him, and as the wolfe was going within the water, the fore by his malice filled the Basket full of stones, and when the basket was full, the fore said to the wolfe: Certainely my Lord, I may no more lift, ne hold the basket so full: for it is full of fish: and the Wolfe weening that the fore had said truth, said, I render thankes to the gods, that I once may see and learne the excellent art of fishing. And then the fore said to him. My Lord, abide you heere, and I shall fetch some to helpe vs for to take the fish out of the basket. And in saying these wordes, the fore ranne into the streete, where he found diuers men, to whom he saide in this manner: What doe you here? why stand ye idle? See yonder is the Wolfe which ate your sheepe, your Lambes and your beasts, and now he taketh your fish out of the riuer, and eateth it. And then all the men came together, some with

slings,

stings, and some with bowes, and other with staues to the riuer, where they found the wolfe, whom they beat outragiously. And when the poore wolfe saw himselfe thus oppressed and beaten with stroakes, he began with all his strength and might to draw, and supposed to haue carryed away the fish, but so strongly he drew, that he pulled his taile from his arse, and very hardly scaped with his life. In the meane time it happened that the Lyon which was king ouer all beasts, was sore sicke, and the wolfe thinking to bee quit with the fore, went for to see him as his Lord: And when he came there, he saluted the Lyon, saying vnto him thus: My King I salute you, pleaseth it you to know that I haue gone round about the country and Prouince, and in all places of it, for to seke medicines profitable for you, for to recouer your health, but nothing haue I found good for your sickneſſe, but onely the skinne of Reynard the fore, fierce, proude and malicious, which is to your body medicinall, but he disdaineth to come hither and see you, but ye may call him to counsell, and when he is come, let his skinne be taken from him, and then let him run whither he will; and that faire skin which is so wholesome, yee shall cause it to be bound vpon your body, and within few dayes after, it shall make you in as good health as euer you were. And when he had said these words, hee departed from the Lyon and tooke his leaue: but euer hee supposed that the fore had heard him, and so hee did, for hee was within a tariar nigh vnto the place, where he heard all the proposition of the Wolfe, to the which he did prouide a remedy, and great preseruation: For as soone

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as the Wolfe was departed from the Lyon, the Fox went into the fields, and in the high way he found a great dunghill, within the which he put himselfe. And when he supposed himselfe to be defiled and dagled enough, he came thus arrayed vnto the lodge of the Lyon, whom he saluted as his soueraigne Lord, saying to him in this manner: Sir King, God giue you good health, and the Lyon answered, God saue thee my sweet friend, come neere and kisse mee, and after I shall tell thee some secret, which I would not that euery one should know. To whom the foresaid in this manner, ah sir King be not displeased, for I am foule arrayed and all to dagled, by reason of the great way which I haue gone, seeking all about for some good medicine to helpe you, wherefore it behoueth me not to be so neere your person, for the stinke of the dung would grieue your person, and molest the great sickneſſe which you haue? but deare Sir, if it please you, ere euer I come neere to your royall maiesty, I shall bathe and make me cleane, and then I shall come againe, and present my selfe before thy noble person: notwithstanding all this, let it please thee to wit and know, that I come from all the countries hereabout, and from all the realmes adioyning to this prouince, for to see if I could finde some good medicine needfull for thy sickneſſe, and to recouer thy health: but certainly I can finde no better counsell, then the counsell of an ancient Greeke with a great long beard, a man of great wisedome and experience, who told me that in this prouince is a wolfe without a taile, the which hath lost his taile by vertue of the medicine that is in him, for the which thing it is very

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needfull and expedient, that ye make this Wolfe to come before you, that by him you may recouer your former health: and when he is come, dissemble and call him to counsell, and say that it shall be much for his worship and profit; and as he shall be neere vnto you, cast vpon him your armed feete, and as swiftly as ye may, pull the skinne from the bōdy of him, and keepe it whole, saue onely ye shall leaue the head and feete, and then let him goe his way to seeke his fortune: and forthwith, when ye haue the skinne hotte and warme, ye shall bind it about your body, and ere long time be passed, your health shall be restored to you againe, and you shall be whole as you were before. And then the For toke his leaue of the King, and departed thence againe vnto his tarrier. Soone after came the wolfe to see the Lyon, and incontinent the Lyon called the wolfe to counsell, and fastened softly his foote on him, and dispoiled the Wolfe of all his skinne, saue only his head and feet, and after the Lyon bound it all warme about his belly, and the wolfe ran away skinles, wherefore he had not enough to defend him from the flyes, which vered him very sore, and for the great distresse that he felt because of the Flyes that ate his flesh, hee was wood, and ran vnder a hill vpon the which the For was. And when the For saw him, hee began to laugh and mocke at the Wolfe, saying aloud, Who art thou that passest there with such a faire hood on thy head? and with right faire gloues on thy hands, and shooes on thy feete? Stay, stay a while and harken what I shall say to thee. When thou wentest and camest before the Kings house, thou wert blessed of the Lord,

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and when thou wast at the Court, thou hadst many good words, and good talking of all the world. And therefore my gossip, be it euill or good, thou must let all passe, and haue patience in thine aduersitie. This fable sheweth vnto vs, that if any be hurt, or endamaged by some other, he must not auenge himselfe by his tongue, for to make any treason, ne for to say of them any harme or blaspheme, for we ought to consider, that whosoeuer maketh the pit ready for his brother, oft it happeth, that hee himselfe falleth in the same, and is beaten with the same rod he made for another.

Of the Wolfe which let a fart.

IT is folly to thinke more then a man ought to doe, for whatsoeuer a foole thinketh, it seemeth to him that it shall be so: As it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe, which sometime rose early in the morning, and after he was risen from his couch, he retched him selfe and let a great fart, and began to say to himselfe, Thanked bee the gods for these good tidings, this day I shall be fortunate and happy, as mine arse singeth to me. And then he departed from his lodging, and began to walke abroad. And as he went on his way, he found a sack full of Tallow which a woman had let fall, and with his foote hee turned it vpside downe, saying to himselfe, I shall not eate thee, for thou shouldest hurt my tender stomake, I shall fare this day more delicious, and farre better I know it well, for mine arse did sing so to me. And with these words he went his way, and anon after he found a great piece of Bacon well salted, which hee turned vpside downe, and when he had turned and tossed

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it enough, he said, I disdaine to eate of this meate, because it would make me drinke too much, for it is salt: and as mine arse sang to me lately, I shall eate this day better and more delicious meate: and then he began to walke further, & as he entred into a faire meddow, he saw a Mare and her foale with her, and said to himselfe, I render thanks vnto the gods, for the goodnesse that they send me, for well I wist, and was certaine, that this day I should find some pretious meate. When he came neere the Mare and said to her, Certainely sister I must eate thy child. And the Mare said, Doe my brother what shall please thee, but first I pray thee doe me one pleasure, I haue often heard say, that thou art a good Surgeon, therefore I desire thee that thou wilt helpe my foot, for as I passed yesterday through the forrest, a thorn entred into my foot behind, which grieueth me very sore, I pray thee therefore before thou eats my foale, to pull the same out of my foote. And the Wolfe said, That shall I gladly doe, good Sister, shew me thy foot: and as the Mare shewed the Wolfe her foote, she gaue him such a stroake betwixt the eies, that he was astonied, and fell flat to the ground, and by this meanes was her foale saued: and a long time after, was the Wolfe lying vpon the earth for dead, and when he was come againe to himselfe, and that he could speake, he said: I care not for this mishap, for well I wot that yet this day I shall eate and be well filled with delicious meat: & in vttering these words, he lifted vp himselfe, and so departed. And hauing walked a space, he found (by chance) a couple of rams fighting in a meddow, that with their hornes smote

each other. Then the Wolfe sayd within himselfe: Blessed be God that now I shall be throughly satisfied. Ye then came neere the two Rammes and said, Certainly, I shall eate one of you. And one of them said vnto him, My Lord, do all that pleaseth you, but first you must giue vs a sentence of a processe of law which is betwixt vs: And the Wolfe answered, That with right good will he would doe it: And after said vnto them, My Lords, tell me your cases, that I may the better giue sentence of your difference and question. And then one of them began to say, My Lord, This meddow was belonging to our Father, and because he died without making any ordinance or testament, we be now in debate and strife for the parting of it; wherefore we pray thée that thou wouldst make an accord betwixt vs, so that peace may be on either side. And then the Wolfe demanded of the Rammes, how their question might be accorded? Right well, said one of them, by the way that I shall tell thee, if thou wilt heare me. We will be at the two ends of the meddow, and thou shalt be in the midst of it, and from the end of the meddow we both shall run toward you, & he that shall first come to you, shalbe Lord of this meddow, and the last shalbe thine. Well, said the Wolfe, Thine advice is good, and well proposed: Let vs see now who shall come first to me. Then went the two Rams to the end of the meddow, & both at once began to run toward the Wolfe, and with all their might came and gaue two such vehement strokes, both at once against both his sides, that almost they brake his heart within his belly, and there fell downe the poore Wolfe all astonied, and the

rams

rams went their way. And when he was come a-gaine to himselfe, he tooke courage, and departed, saying thus vnto himselfe, Yet shall I this day eate some good dainty meate. He had not long walked but he found a Sow and her small pigges with her, and incontinent as soone as he saw her he said: Thankes be to the gods that I shall this day eate and fill my belly with good meat, and shall haue good lucke: and in saying that, he approched to the Sow, and said to her, My sister, I must eate some of thy young pigges: and the Sow said to him, My Lord, I am content, eate what shall please you, but ere you eate, I pray that they may be baptized, and made cleane in pure and faire water: and the Wolfe said, Shew me the water, and I will wash and baptize them well: then the Sow led him to a riuer where was a faire mill, and as the wolfe was vpon a little bridge of the said mill, and that he would haue taken a pigge, the Sow thrust the Wolfe into the water with her head, and for the swiftnesse of the water, he must needs passe vnder the wheele of the said mill, but God knowes whether the wings of the mill did beat him well or not, yet as soone as he might, he ranne his way, and as he ran he said to himselfe, I care not for so little shame, sith I shall eate my belly full of delicious meate, as mine arse did sing early to me. And as he passed through the streete he saw some sheepe, and as the sheepe saw him, they entred into a stable, and when the Wolfe came there, he said vnto them in this manner, God saue you my sisters, I must eate one of you, to the end that my great hunger may be fully satisfyed. Then said they vnto him, Certainly

my Lord, you are welcome to Valle, for we be come hither to hold a great solemnitie, and therefore we desire you that you pontifically would sing, and after the Service compleate and finished, do your pleasure with one of vs. The Wolfe for vaine-glorie, fayning to be a Prelate, began to sing and howle aloud before the sheep; and when the men of the towne heard the voice of the wolfe, they came into the stable with great staues, and so layd vpon the Wolfe that he could hardly goe: neuertheless, he escaped and went vnder a great tree, vpon which tree stood a man that hewed downe the boughes thereof. The wolfe then began to sigh sore, and to make great sorrow for his euill hap, and said: Ha Iupiter. How many euils haue I had and escaped? But I know it is long of my selfe and by mine owne meanes and proud thoughts; for this day in the morning I found a sack full of Tallow, which I disdained, and anon after that a peece of bacon, which I would not eate for feare of great thirst, and because of foolish conceit: so that the euill that happeneth to me, is rightly bestowed. My Father was neuer Physician, nor Leach, neither haue I euer studied or learned the Science of Physicke, therefore if there hapned any euill to me when I would haue drawne the thorne out of the Mares foote, it is well imployed. Also my Father was neither patriarke nor bishop, nor euer knew any letter in the booke, and yet I presumed & tooke vpon me to doe sacrifice, and to sing before the gods fayning my selfe a Prelate; but after my deserning I was well rewarded: also my Father was neuer Lawyer nor Iustice, and yet I would take vpon mee

mée to be a great Iustice. But I knew neuer neither A. ne B. and therefore the euill that is come to me is most right. O Iupiter, I am worthy of a very great punishment for my offences. Send thou now to me from thy high throane a sword, or other weapon, wherewith I may strongly punish and beat my selfe by great penance, for well worthy I am to receiue a greater punishment. Now the good man being vpon the trée, and hearing all these words of the Wolfe, said nothing. And when the Wolfe had made an end of his sighings and complaints, the good man tooke his axe wherewith he had cut away the dead branches of the trée, and cast it vpon the wolfe, and it fell vpon his backe in such manner, that the Wolfe turned vpside downe with his féete vpward, in such sort that he lay as if he had beene starke dead. And after hée was reuiued againe, he looked vp toward heauen, and began thus to cry out, Ha Iupiter, I now see well that thou hast heard my prayer. And by earnestly looking vp, he espied the man which sat in the trée, and thinking him to be Iupiter, he presently fled toward the forrest as fast as he could, being very sore hurt and wounded: & euer after he became more méke and humble, then before he was fierce & proud. By this fable men may sée, that many things fall out which a foole thinketh not on. And it sheweth to vs, that when any little good hap falleth vnto vs, wee ought not to refuse it in hope of better fortune: it likewise sheweth, that none are to take vpon them to do that which they haue no skill to doe.

Of the enuious Dogge.

NO man ought to haue enuy at other mens good fortune, as appeareth by this fable of an enuious dogge which went into a ſtable of Oxen, becauſe that they ſhould not enter in for to eate of the hay. And then the Oxen ſaid vnto him, Thou art euill and peruerſe to haue enuy of other mens good, the which is to vs needfull & profitable, for thy kind is not to eate hay. And thus he did of a great bone which he held in his mouth, he would not leaue it, becauſe of the enuy of another dogge being heard by. This fable therefore teacheth vs, that it behoueth euery one to keepe himſelfe from the company of an enuious perſon.

Of the Wolfe and the hungry Dogge.

THere be ſome that thinke to winne, which often happen to leeſe, for it is commonly ſaid, that as much ſpedeth the niggard as the liberall, as it appeareth by this fable, of a man which had a great flocke of ſheepe, and alſo he had a dogge for to keepe them from the Wolues. To this dogge he gaue no meate for the great auarice that he had, and therefore the Wolfe on a day came to the Dogge, and demanded of him the reaſon why he was ſo leane, and ſaid vnto him, I ſee well that thou art ready to ſtarue through hunger, by reaſon ỹ thy maſter giueth thee no meate by his ſcarcity, but if thou wilt beleeue mee, I ſhall giue thee good counſell. And the Dogge ſaid to him, Certainly I lacke greatly good counſell. Then the Wolfe ſaid to him, This ſhalt thou doe, Let me take a Lambe, and when I ſhall haue it, I ſhall runne away,

away, and when thou seest mée, make semblance to run after me, and faine thy selfe that thou canst not ouertake me for lacke and fault of meate, which maketh thée so féeble. And thus when the shepheard shall sée that thou maiest not run because of thy great féeblenesse, and debilitie of body, he shall tell thy Lord that thou maiest not recouer the lambe because thou art so leane & hungry, and by this meane thou shalt haue thy belly full of meate. The dogge then accorded with the Wolfe, and each of them did as aboue said. And when the Shepheard saw the dogge fall, he supposed well that hunger was the cause of it, for the which cause when he came home he told his master, & when he vnderstood it, he said as a man wroth for shame, I will that from henceforth you giue him bread enough, and then euery day the same dogge had soppes of bread and dry bread enough, whereby he got strength and vigour againe. It hapned within a while after, that the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge, and said to him, I perceiue well that I gaue thée good counsell. And the dogge said to the Wolfe, My brother thou saiest truth, wherefore I thanke thee much, for of it I had great nede. And then the Wolfe said to him, If thou wilt, I shall giue thee yet better counsell. And the Dogge answered him, With a very good will I shall heare it, and if it be good I shall doe after it. Then said the Wolfe to him, Giue mée leaue to take another Lambe, and doe thou runne after me for to haue it from me, and to bite me, and I shall violently ouerthrow thée with thy feete vpward, as he that hath no puissance and strength, and yet notwithstanding all this, I will not hurt thée:

beléeue me hardly, and good shall hap to thee. And when thy maisters seruants shall haue séene thy diligence, they shall shew thy maister, how that thou shalt kéepe full well his fold, if thou be well nourished. And then the dogge answered the wolfe, that he was content. And as it was said, right so it was done, and both of them made good diligence: the wolfe ranne away with the Lambe, and the dog ran after and ouer-tooke him, and bit him faintly, and the Wolfe ouer-threw the Dogge vpside downe to the ground. And when the Shepheard saw the wolfe giue such strokes vpon the Dogge, the Shepheard said, Certainely we haue a good dogge, we must tell his diligence to our maister, and how he hit the wolfe, and how he was ouerthrowne, and yet said certainly, if he had euer meate enough, the wolfe had not borne away the Lambe. Then the Lord commanded to giue him plenty of meate, whereof the dogge tooke againe all his strength: And within a while after, the Wolfe came againe to the Dogge, and said vnto him in this manner, My brother, haue I not giuen to thee good counsell? And the dog said, Certainly thou hast, for which I thanke thee. Then the Wolfe said to the Dog, I pray thee my brother, that thou wilt yet giue me another Lambe. And the dog said to him, Certainly my brother it may suffice thee to haue had two of them. Then said the wolfe, At the least thou maiest let me haue one for my labour and salary. That shalt thou not, said the Dogge, hast thou not had good salarie for to haue had two Lambes of my Maisters? And the wolfe answered to him againe, My brother, giue it mee if it please

thée.

thée. And the dogge ſaid, Nay I will not, and if thou takeſt it againſt my will, I promiſe thee, that neuer after this time thou ſhalt eate any more. And the Wolfe ſaid, Alas my brother, I dye for hunger, tell mee for Gods loue what ſhall I doe. Then the dogge ſaid to him, I ſhall counſell thee well; a wall of my maſters celler is fallen downe, goe thou thither this night and enter into it, & there thou maieſt both eate and drinke at thy pleaſure, for both bread, fleſh and wine ſhalt thou finde there in great plenty. Then the wolfe ſaid to the dogge, Alas my brother, beware I pray thee that thou accuſe me not, ne deceiue me. And the dogge anſwered, I warrant thee, but looke thou doe thy feate ſo priuily that none of my fellows know of it. And the wolfe came at night and entred into the celler, and ate and dranke, at his pleaſure, inſomuch that he waxed drunke, and when he was drunke, he ſaid to himſelfe, When the villaines be filled with meates, and that they be drunke, they ſing, and wherefore ſhould not I ſing? And anon he began to cry and howle. Then the dogges heard his voyce and began to barke & howle, and the ſeruants which heard them, ſaid, It is ſurely the Wolfe which is entred within the celler, and they all together went thither and killed the Wolfe. Wherefore, more diſpendeth the niggard then the bountifull, for couetouſneſſe was neuer good; for many there be which dare not eate and drinke as nature requireth, but neuertheleſſe, euery one ought to liue prudently, of all ſuch goods as pleaſeth God to ſend them. This fable ſheweth alſo to vs, that none ought to do againſt his kind, as the Wolfe, which waxed drunke, for the

which

which cause he was slaine.

Of the Father and his three children.

HE is not wise which for to haue vanitie and his pleasure, maketh debate and strife: As it appeares by this fable. There was a man which had three children, and at the houre of death he bequeathed and gaue them his heritage, that is to wit, a Peare tree, a Goate, and a Pill. And when the father was dead, the brethren assembled themselues together, and went before the Iudge, for to part the liuelihood, and said to the Iudge, My Lord, Our Father is dead and hath bequeathed to vs three Brethren all his heritage, and one should haue as much of it as the other. And then the Iudge demanded what was their liuelihood: And they answered? A Peare tree, a Goate, and a Pill. And then the Iudge said to them, That he that should sit and deuide equal your parts, for the one to haue as much of it as another, should haue a very hard matter to doe, but by your owne aduice how would you haue it? And then the eldest of the three brethren spake and said, I shall take from the Peare tree all that is crooked and right, And the second said, I shall take from the Peare tree all that is greene and dry. And the third said, I shall haue all the roote, the pill or mast, and all the branches of the Peare tree. And the Iudge said to them, He that then shall haue the most part of it, let him be Iudge, for neither I nor any else can vnderstand or know who shall thereby haue the most or least part of it, and therefore he that can proone openly, that he hath the most part, shall be Lord of the whole tree. Then the Iudge demanded of them, how their father

ther had demised to them the Goate? and they said to him, He that shall make fairest prayer and request must haue the Goat. And then the first brother made his request and said, would God that the Goate were now so great, that he might drink all the water which is vnder the cope of heauen, and when he had drunke it, he should be yet more thirstie. The second said, I suppose that the Goate shall be mine, for a fairer demand and request then thine is I shall now make: I would that all the Hempe and Flaxe, and all the woll in the world were made into one thred alone, and that the goate were so great, that with the same thred men might not binde one of his legges. Then said the third, The Goate shall surely bee mine, for I would that he were so great, that if an Eagle were at the vppermost part of heauen, he might occupie and haue there as much place, as the Eagle might looke on in height, length and breadth. And then the Iudge said, Which of you three haue made the fairest prayer, Certainly neither I nor any other can giue the iudgement, and therefore the Goate shall bee to him that of it shall say the truth. And the Mill, how was it aduised by your Father to be parted among you three? They answered the Iudge, He that shall be the most lyar, most euill, and most slow, ought to haue it. Then said the eldest sonne: I am most slothfull, for many yeeres past I haue dwelled in a great house, and lay vnder the conduits of the same, where fell vpon me all the foule waters: as pisse, dish-water, and other filth, that most wonderfully stanke, insomuch that all my flesh was rotten thereof, and mine eyes blind, and the durt vnder my backe was

a foote

a foot high, and yet by sloth I had rather abide there then to rise vp. The second said, Suppose that the Mill shall be mine, for if I came to a table couered with all manner of delicate meates whereof I might eate if I would take of the best, I am so slothfull that I may not eate, without one should put the meate in my mouth. The third said, The Mill shall be mine, for I am yet a greater lyar, and more slothfull then any of you both, for if I had thirst vnto the death, and if I found then my selfe within a faire water vp to the necke, I would rather die then moone my selfe to drinke one drop thereof. Then said the Iudge, Ye wot not what ye say, for neither I, nor any other may well vnderstand you, but the cause I remit among you. And thus they went without any sentences, for to a foolish demand, belongeth a foolish answer; and therefore they be fooles that will pleade in such sort one against another, for to a small matter, belongeth a small plea.

Of the Wolfe and the Foxe.

NOne may be master, except first he haue beene a disciple. As it appeareth by this fable of a fox which came to a wolfe, and said to him, My Lord, I pray ye that ye will be my gossip. And the wolfe answered, I am content. And the fox tooke him his sonne praying him that he should learne his sonne good doctrine, the which the wolfe tooke, and went with him vpon a mountaine, and said to the little Foxe, when the beasts come to the field, call me. And the Fox went and saw from the top of a high hill how all the beastes were comming to the field, wherefore hee called his Godfather and said, My Godfather, the beasts

beasts come into the field. And the Wolfe demaunded of him what beasts they were. The Fox answered, There be both kine and swine together. Well said the Wolfe, I care not for them, let them goe, for the Dogs be with them. Soone after, the Fox looked on the other side, and perceiued a Mare which went to the fields, and he went to his Godfather and said, Godfather, a Mare is gone to the fields. And the Wolfe demanded of him, whereabout is shee? and the Fox answered, she is by the forrest: and the Wolfe said, now go we to dinner: and the Wolfe with his godson went into the Forrest, and came to the Mare and perceiued a young Colt by her. Then the Wolfe tooke the Colt by the necke, and drew him into the wood, and deuoured him betweene them both: and when they had well eaten, the godsonne said to the godfather, My Godfather, I commend you to God, and much I thanke you for your good doctrine, for ye haue taught me well, insomuch that now I am a great clark, and now I will goe to my mother. Then the Wolfe said to his godsonne, My godsonne, if thou goest away, thou shalt repent thee, for thou hast not yet still studied, neither knowest thou yet thy syllogismes. Ya my good godfather, said the Fox, I know well all. Then the Wolfe said to him, Sith thou wilt needs goe, to God I commend thee. And when the Fox was come to his mother, she said to him, surely thou hast not studied enough, and then he said to his mother, I am so great a Clarke, that I can cast the diuell from the clift. Come let vs goe chase, and ye shall see whether I can doe ought or nought. And the young Fox would haue done as his godfather the

Wolfe

wolfe did, & ſaid to his mother, Make a good watch, and when the beaſts ſhall come to the field; let mee haue knowledge thereof. And his mother ſaid, well ſo ſhall I doe. She made good watch, and when ſhee ſaw the Kine and the Swine goe to the fields, ſhe ſaid vnto him, My ſonne, the Kine and Swine goe together into the fields: and he anſwered: My mother, for them I care not, let them goe, for the Dogs keepe them well: and within a ſhort while after, the mother ſaw the Mare come nere vnto the wood, and ſaid vnto her ſonne, My ſonne, the Mare is neere vnto the wood: and he anſwered, My mother, thats be good tidings, abide ye here, for I goe to fetch our dinner: and he entred into the wood, and after would doe as his godfather had done before, and went and tooke the Mare by the necke, but the Mare tooke him with her teeth and bare him to the Shepheard, and the mother cryed from the toppe of the hill, My ſonne, let goe the mare and come hither againe, but he might not, for the Mare held him faſt with her teeth: and as the Shepheard came for to kill him, the mother cryed, and ſaid weeping: Alas my ſonne, thou didſt not learne well, and haſt beene too little a while at Schoole, wherefore for thy fooliſh preſumption, thou muſt now dye miſerably: and the Shepheard tooke and ſlew him. Which fable ſheweth, that none ought to make himſelfe learned, except he haue firſt well ſtudied, for ſome thinke themſelues to be great Clarkes, that can doe nothing clarkly.

Of

Of a man, the old Lion, and his sonne.

HE that refuseth the good doctrine of his Father, if euill happe come vnto him, it is both right and reason, as this Fable rehearseth vnto vs: Of a Labourer which sometime liued in a Desart by his culturing labour. In this Desart also liued a Lion that walked and destroyed all the Seede that euery day the said labourer had sowed: and also this Lion destroyed and spoiled his trees. And because he did to him so great harme, he made a hedge, to the which he set cordes and nettes to take the Lion. And on a certaine time, the Lion came to eate corne, and entred within a nette, and was taken; and then the labourer came thither, and beat him so wonderfully, that scarcely he could escape away with life. And because that the Lion saw that he might not escape the subtilty of the man, he tooke his young Lion and went and dwelt in another Region. And within a while after, when the young Lion was growne, and was fierce, and strong, he demanded of his Father, and said; My Father, be we of this Region? Nay, sayd the Father, for we be fled away from our Land. And the young Lion demaunded of him wherefore? and the Father answered him, for the great subtilty and crafty deuices of the Man. And the young Lion demanded of him, what man it was? And his Father answered and sayd vnto him, he is nothing so great, nor so strong as we be, but he is farre more subtile & ingenious than we be, making snares to take vs.

And

And the ſonne anſwered to the Father, I ſhall goe auenge me on him. And the great Lion ſaid to him, Goe not, for if thou goeſt thither, thou ſhalt repent thée thereof, and ſhalt doe like a Fole. And the ſonne anſwered the Father, By mine head I ſhall goe thither, and ſée what he can doe. And as he went to find the man, he met an Oxe within a meddow, and an horſe whoſe backe was al flaine and ſore, to whom he ſaid in this manner, Who is he that hath led you hither, and that ſo hath hurt you? And they ſaid to him, It is the man. And he ſaid to them, Certainly this is a marueilous thing, I pray you that ye will let me ſée him. Then they departed and ſhewed him the Labourer as he eared the earth, and the Lyon without vttering any words paſſed toward the man, to whom he ſpake in this maner: Ha man, thou haſt done ouer many euils both to me and to my father, and likewiſe to our beaſts: Therefore I tell thee, that to me thou muſt doe right. And the man ſaid, I aduiſe thee to take héede, for and if thou commeſt too neare me, I ſhall kill thee with this great club, and after with this knife I ſhall flea thee. And the Lion ſaid, Come before my Father, and he as king ſhall do to vs good iuſtice. And the man ſaid, I am content, if thou wilt ſweare to me, that thou wilt not touch me, vntill we be in preſence of thy Father, and alſo I ſhall ſweare vnto thée, that I ſhall goe with thée into the preſence of thy father. Thus the Lyon and the man beganne to goe together by the way where his cords and nets had béene ſet: and as they paſſed by, the Lyon fell into a cord, and by the feete he was taken, ſo that he could go no further: then he ſaid

ſaid to the man, O I pray thee that thou wilt helpe me, for I may not goe. And the man anſwered to him, I may not, for I haue ſworne vnto thee that I will not touch thee vntill we come before thy father. And as the Lyon ſuppoſed to haue vnbound himſelfe for to ſcape, he fell into another ſnare. And then he began to cry after the man, ſaying, O good man, I pray thee vnbind me. But the man began to ſtrike him vpon the head: and when the Lyon ſaw that hee might not eſcape, hee ſaid to the man, I pray thee that thou ſmite me no more vpon the head, but vpon the eares, becauſe I would not heare the counſell of my father. And the man began to ſmite him at the heart and ſlew him. Therefore we ſee, that vnto diſobedient children, many times miſ-fortune befalleth.

Of the Knight and his ſeruant which found the Foxe.

MAny there be that for their great leaſing ſuppoſe to put vnder all the World, but euer at the laſt their leaſings be knowne, as appeareth by this fable, of a Knight which went with an Archer of his through the land, and as they rode they found a Fox, and the Knight ſaid to the Archer, In good ſooth I ſee a great Fox. And the Archer ſaid, My Lord, marueil you thereat? I haue beene in the region whereas the Foxes be as great as Oxen. And the Knight ſaid, In good ſooth their ſkins were good to make mantles with if ſkinners might haue them. And as they were riding they fell into many words and deuices, and becauſe the Knight perceiued well the leaſing of the Archer, hee began to make prayers

to the gods for to make his Archer afraid, and said in this manner. O Iupiter thou great god, I pray thee that this day thou wilt keepe vs from leasing, so that we may passe safe this great riuer which is here before vs, and that we may safely come to our house. And when the archer heard the prayer of his Lord, he was greatly abashed, and demanded of his Lord, wherefore he prayed so deuoutly. And the Knight answered. Wottest thou not well that thou must soone passe a great riuer, & that he who all this day shall haue made one leasing, if he enter in, he shall neuer come out againe? Of which words the archer was very dreadfull. And when they had ridden a little way, they found a little riuer, Wherefore the archer demanded of his Lord, Is this the flood which we must passe? No said the Knight, it is greater. O my Lord, I say so, because that the Fore which you saw, might well haue swimmed ouer this little water. And the Lord said, I care not therefore. And after they had ridden a little further, they found another little riuer, and the archer demanded of him, Is this the flood that ye spake of? May said he, for it is greater & broader. And the archer said againe to him: My Lord, I say so, because the Fore of the which I spake to day, was no greater then a Calfe: and then the Knight hearing the dissimulation of the archer, answered not: and so they rode forth along, til they found yet another riuer. And then the archer demanded of his Lord is that the same? May said the knight, but soone we shall come thereto. O my Lord, quoth he, I aske, because that the fore whereof I spake to you this day, was no greater then a sheepe: and when they

they had ridden till euening, they found a Riuer of great breadth, and when the Archer saw it, he began to shake for feare, and demanded of his Lord. My Lord, is this the Riuer? Yea said the Knight, O my Lord, said he, I assure you on my faith, that the for of the which I spake to day, was no greater then the fore which we saw to day, wherefore I confesse to you my sinne. And then the Knight beganne to smile, and said to his archer in this manner: this riuer also is no worse then the riuers which we saw before and haue passed through. Then the archer was ashamed, because he might no more couer his leasing. Wherefore it is good euer to say the truth, and to practise honest dealing both in word and deed, for the false speaches of a lyar procure his owne shame and contempt among men.

Of the Eagle and the Rauen.

NOne ought to take vpon him for to doe a thing which is perilous, except to know himselfe to be able to doe it, as appeareth by this fable. An Eagle by flying tooke a Lambe, whereof the Rauen had great enuy, and said to himselfe, Wherefore should not I take a Lambe as well as the Eagle? And shortly after, as the Rauen saw a great flocke of sheepe passe along by him, he descended very proudly and outragiously on them, and in such manner smot a weather that the clawes abode in the flesh, by reason whereof he could not flye away. Then the Shepheard came and brake his wings, and tooke him, and after bare him to his children to play withall, and they demanded of him what bird he was. And the Rauen answered to them, I supposed to haue beene an Eagle,

and by my ouer-weening, I thought to haue taken a Lambe as the Eagle did. But now I know well that I am a Rauen. Wherefore the fable ought not to compare with the strong, for sometime when he supposeth to doe more then he may, he falleth thereby into great dishonor, as appeareth by this present fable of the Rauen, which supposed himselfe to be as strong as the Eagle.

Of the Eagle and the Wesill.

NO man what might soeuer he hath, ought to dispraise another, as appeareth by this present fable, of an Eagle which chased sometime after an Hare, and because that the Hare might not resist against the Eagle, he demanded ayd and helpe of the Wesill, which tooke her into her keeping: and because the Eagle saw the Wesill so little, he dispayred her, and by force tooke away the Hare, whereat the Wesill was wroth, and went and beheld the nest of the Eagle which was vpon an high tree, and seeing it, cligmed vp into the tree and cast downe the yong Eagles, whereof they dyed. And for this cause the Eagle was angry, and went with Iupiter, praying him that he would find him a sure place where he might lay his egges and his little chickins, and Iupiter did grant it, and withall gaue him such a gift, that when the time of childing should come, he should make her yong ones within his bosome. When the Wesill knew this, she gathered together a great quantity of ordure or filth; and thereof made a high hill, for to let her selfe fall from the top of it into the bosome of Iupiter, and when Iupiter felt the stinke, he beganne to shake his bosome, and both the Wesill and the

the egges of the Eagle fell downe to the ground, and thus were all the egges broken and lost: And when the Eagle knew it, she made a vow that shé would neuer make any Eagle, vntill she were thereof assured. And therefore none, how mighty and strong soeuer he be, ought to dispraise another, for there is none so simple, but that he may auenge himselfe either one way or other.

Of the Foxe and the Goate.

HE which is wise, ought to consider the end before he begin any worke, as appeareth by this fable of a Fox and a Goat which sometime descended into a deepe Well for to drinke, & when they had drunke, because they could not come vp againe, the Fox said to the Goate, My friend, if thou wilt helpe me, we shall be soone both out of this Well: for if thou wilt set thy two feete against the wall, I shall well leape vpon thee, and then I shall leape out of the well: and when I shall be out of it, thou shalt take me by the hand, and I shall draw thee out of the well. And vnto this thing the Goate accorded, and said I will. And then the Goate lift vp his feete against the wall, and the fox did so much as by his subtilty that he got out of the well, and when hee was out, he began to looke downe vpon the Goate which was within the well. And the Goate said vnto him, Helpe me now as thou hast promised. But the Fore beganne to laugh at him, saying: O maister Goate, if thou hadst bene wise, according to the grauity of thy faire beard, thou wouldest ere euer thou haddest entred into this well, haue taken héed how thou shouldest come forth of it againe. Wherefore he that

will wisely gouerne himselfe, ought euer to take hæde to the end of the worke.

Of the Cat and the Chickin.

He that is false by nature, and hath begunne to deceiue others, will vse his craft still, as it appeareth by this present fable. A Cat there was that sometime tooke a Chickin, the which he began very greatly to blame, onely that he might picke a quarrell and eate him, saying vnto him after this maner: Come hither, little Chickin, thou dooest no good but cry all the night, and kepest me thereby from sleeping. And the Chickin answered, I doe it for thy great profit. Then the Cat said to him, Yet which is worse, thou art an incestuous teacher, for thou knowest naturally both the mother and the daughter: and the Chicken said, I doe it that my master may haue egges for his eating, and my master for his profit, gaue to mée both mother and daughter for to multiply the egges. Then the Cat said to him, By my faith gossip thou hast excuses enow, but nevertheless thou shalt passe through my throate, for I purpose not to fast this day for all thy words. Thus it is of him which is accustomed to liue by rauine, for he cannot abstaine from it, for all the excuses that may be made.

Of the Fox and the Bush.

Men ought not to aske helpe of them that bee more accustomed to doe euill then good, as it appeareth by this Fable. There was a Fore which for to escape the perill to be taken, tread vpon a thorne which did hurt him sore, wherefore weeping hée sayd to the bush, I am come to thée as my refuge,

refuge, and thou hast hurt me: And the bush said to him, Thou hast erred and beguiled thy selfe, for thou supposedst to haue taken me as thou doest hens and chickins. And therefore men ought not to helpe them which be accustomed to doe euill, but ought rather to hinder them.

Of the Man and his Idoll.

OF the euill man sometime commeth profit to some other, though it be contrary to his will, as appeareth by this fable: of a man which had in his house an Idoll, which he oftentimes adored as his God, and the more he prayed to him, the more he failed and became poore, wherefore the man was angry at his Idol, and tooke it by the legs, and smote the head of it so strongly against the wal, that it brake all to pieces, out of which Idoll issued a great treasure, whereof the man was glad and ioyfull. And the man said to the Idoll, Now know I well that thou art wicked, euill and peruerse, for when I worshipped thee thou didst nought for me. Therefore when euill men doe good, it is against their will.

Of a Fisher.

ONce a Fisher piped for to make the fish dance: and when he saw that for no song he could pipe they would dance, he waxed angry, and cast his nets into the water, and tooke great store of fish, and when he had drawn his nets to land, the fish began to leape and dance, and then he said vnto them: Certainly it appeareth now well that ye be very euill beasts, for now when ye be taken, ye leape and dance, and before when I piped on my Bagpipe, I could not get you to dance. Therefore it appeareth well

that those things which be done in season, be well done, and by good advice.

Of the Cat and the Rat.

THe man that is wise and hath once béene beguiled, will no more trust him that hath beguiled him, as rehearseth this fable, of a Cat that went into a house where many rats were, which he did eate one after another. And when the Rats perceiued the fiercencsse and cruelty of the Cat, they held a counsell together, whereas they determined with one consent that they should no more come vpon the lower ground. Wherefore one of them most ancient, said to all the other, My brethren, yee know against whom we may not resist, therefore we must néeds hold our selues vpon the vpper balkes, to the end our enemy may not take vs: of the which words the other Rats were wel content, and agréed to his counsell. And when the Cat knew the counsell of the Rats, he hung himselfe by his two feete behind, vpon a pin of yron which did stick in a balke, faining himselfe to be dead. Then one of the Rats looking downward, and séing the Cat so hanging, began to laugh, and said to the Cat, O my friend, if I knew that thou wert dead, I would come downe, but I know thée to be false, and doest but hang to counterfeiting thy selfe to be dead, therefore I will not goe downe. By which we learne, not to trust him the second time, which hath deceiued vs once.

Of the labourer and the Pielarge.

HEe which is taken with the wicked and euill, ought to suffer like paine and punishment. As it appeareth by this Fable: Of a Labourer which some-

ſometime dreſſed and ſet gins for to take the Geeſe, and alſo the Cranes which did eate his Corne. It hapned that once in a morning he tooke a great many of Geeſe & Cranes, and a Pielarge among them, which earneſtly prayed the Labourer to let him goe, ſaying that he came not thither to doe any harme. At theſe words the Labourer began to laugh, and ſaid to the Pielarge, If thou hadſt not beene in their fellowſhip, thou hadſt not entred into my nette, nor beene taken, but becauſe thou art found and taken with them, thou ſhalt be puniſhed as they be. Wherefore none ought to keepe company with ſuch as doe euill, vnleſſe he be willing to be puniſhed as they be for their bad conditions.

Of the child which kept the ſheepe.

THe man which is accuſtomed to make leaſings, ſhall not bee beleeued when he telleth the truth, as rehearſeth this preſent Fable, of a child which ſometime kept ſheepe, the which cryed oft without cauſe, ſaying, Alas for Gods loue ſuccour mee, for the Wolfe will eate my ſheepe. And when the Labourers that cultured & eared the earth thereabouts heard his cry, they came to him, and did ſo very often and found nothing, and as they ſaw that there was no Wolues, they returned againe to their owne labour. Notwithſtanding, it hapned on a day that the Wolfe came indeed, and the childe cryed as hee was accuſtomed to doe, and becauſe that the labourers had beene oftentimes deceiued, they kept their worke ſtill, and ſuppoſed that it was not truth, by reaſon whereof the Wolfe ranne away with one of the ſheepe. Thus we ſee, that men will not lightly beleeue

beleeue him that is knowne for a lyar.

Of the Ant and the Columbe.

NOne ought to be ingratefull for the benefites which he receiueth of another, as rehearseth this Fable, of an Ant which came to a Fountaine to drinke, and as she would haue drunke, she fell into the Fountaine, wherein she thought to haue bene drowned without helpe, and the Columbe tooke a branch of a tree, and cast it to saue her selfe, and then the Ant went anon vpon the branch and saued her selfe. Then came the falconer which would haue taken the said Columbe, and the Ant seeing the Falconer preparing his Nets, came to his foote, and so fast pricked him, that shee caused him to smite the earth with his foote, and therewith made so great a noise that the Columbe heard it, and withall flew away before the ginnes and nets were set. Wherefore none ought to forget the benefit which he hath receiued of some other: for ingratitude is a great sin.

Of the Bee and Iupiter.

THe euill that a man sheweth to another, commeth to himselfe, as appeareth by this fable, of a Bee which offered vnto Iupiter a piece of Hony, whereof Iupiter was much ioyfull, and said to the Bee, Demand of me what thou wilt, and I shall giue it thee. Then the Bee prayed him in this manner, O Iupiter, I pray thee that thou wilt grant mee that whatsoeuer shall come for to take away my Hony, if I sting him, he may suddainely die. And because that Iupiter loued the humane linage, he said to the Bee, Let it suffice thee, that whosoeuer shall take thy hony, if thou sting or pricke him, incontinent thou shalt

dye:

dye: and thus her request was turned to her owne harme. Wherefore men ought not to demand of God any thing that is vnhonest or vniust.

Of the Carpenter and of Mercury.

By how much God is more mercifull and benigne to the good and holy, so much the more he punisheth the wicked and euill, as we may see by this fable, of a Carpenter which cut wood by a riuer for to make a Temple to the gods. And as he cut wood, his Axe fell into the water, wherefore he beganne to weepe, and to call to the gods for helpe: and the god Mercury for pity appeared to him, and asked him wherefore he wept, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and asked of him if that were the Axe which he had lost. And he said nay: then the god shewed him another Axe of siluer, and he semblably said: and because Mercury saw that he was good and true, he drew his Axe out of the water, and gaue it him, and much good besides hee gaue him. And the Carpenter told this story to his fellowes, of the which one of them came to the same place to cut as his fellow did before, and let fall his Axe into the water and began to weepe, and to demand helpe and ayde of the gods. Whereupon Mercury appeared before him, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and demanded of him saying, Is this same it that thou hast lost? And he answered to Mercury and said, Yea fayre Sir and mighty god, that same is it: and Mercury seeing the malice of the villaine, gaue to him neyther the one nor the other, but left him weeping for his owne Axe. Thus god which is good and iust, rewardeth all good men in this world, euery one after his

his deſerving, and puniſheth the euill and vniuſt.

Of the young theefe and his mother.

THe child which is not chaſtiſed in the beginning will proone euill and peruerſe in the end: as we may perceiue by this Fable. There was a yong child which in his youth began to ſteale, and all that he did ſteale he brought to his mother, & the mother tooke it gladly, & would in no wiſe correct him, and after he had ſtollen many things, he was taken and condemned to be hanged, and as men led him to the Juſtice, his mother followed him and wept ſore: And then the child prayed the Juſtice that hee might ſay ſomewhat to his mother, and hauing leaue, he approched to her, & making as though he would ſpeake to her in her eare, with his teeth he bit off her noſe: for which when the Judge blamed him, he anſwered in this manner, My Lord, ſhe is the cauſe of my death, for if ſhe had well chaſtiſed mee, I had not come to this ſhame. By which fable we may learne, that it is better for parents to chaſtiſe their children being young, then to be grieued by them when they are old.

Of the Flea and the man.

EVery little euill is to be puniſhed, as appeareth by this fable. There was a man which tooke a flea that bit him, to whom he ſaid: Flea why biteſt thou me, and wilt not let me ſleepe? And the flea anſwered, It is my kind to doe ſo. Wherefore I pray thee put me not to death. And the man began to laugh and ſaid, Thou canſt not hurt me greatly, neuertheleſſe, onely for biting mee, thou ſhalt die. Therefore ſmall euils are not to be ſuffered.

Of

Of the Husbandman and his two Wiues.

NOthing is worſe to a man then a woman, as appeareth by this fable. There was a man of meane age that had two wiues, that is to ſay, an old and a young, which were both dwelling in his houſe, and becauſe that the old deſired to haue his loue, ſhe pulled the blacke haires from his head, becauſe he ſhould be the more like to her: and the young woman on the other ſide pulled out all the white haires, to the end that he ſhould ſeeme the younger, & more faire in her ſight. And thus the good man abode without any haire on his head. And therfore it is great folly for an ancient man to marry againe: or for any man to place his affection on two women at once, and to ſeek to pleaſe them both.

Of the Labourer and his Children.

HE that laboureth continually, is likely to bée rich in ſubſtance, as appeareth by this Fable: There was a labouring man which had diligently wrought all his life time, and was thereby waxen rich, & when he ſhould die, he ſaid to his children, My treaſure I haue left in my Vine, And after that this good man was dead, his children ſuppoſing that his treaſure had béene hid in his Vine. did nothing all day but delue, and it bare more fruit then it did before: for who ſo trauelleth well, he hath euer bread enough for to eate, and hee that worketh not, dyeth for hunger.

Here endeth the ſubtile Fables of Eſop.

Here

Here beginne the Fables of Auian, right pleasant to reade.

The first Fable is of the old Woman and the Wolfe.

EVery kind of spirit is not to be beleeued by vs, as appeareth by this Fable, of an old woman, which saith vnto her child because it wept: Certainly if thou weepest any more, I shall make the Wolfe to eate thee. The Wolfe hearing this old woman say so, abode still at the gate, and supposed to haue the child to eate, and when the Wolfe had tarryed there so long that hee was hungry, he returned againe to the wood, and the the Wolfe demanded of him, Why hast thou brought me no meate? and he answered, The old woman hath beguiled me, which promised me her child to eate, and at the last I had it not. Therefore men ought not to put any great confidence in a womans speeches.

The second Fable is of the Torteſſe and of the other Bird.

HE that exalteth himselfe more then he ought to doe, seldome cometh to good, as appeareth by this Fable, of a Torteſſe which said to the birds, If ye lift me vp very high from the ground into the aire, I shall shew to you great plenty of precious stones. Then the Eagle tooke her, and bare her so high that she might not see the earth, and said to her, Shew me now

now the precious stones that thou promisedst to shew me: and because the Mortelle might not see the earth, and that the Eagle knew well that he was deceiued, he thrust his clawes into the Mortelle belly, and killed him. By which fable we learne, that he which will haue worship and glory, may not get it without great labour: therefore it is better and more sure for a man to keepe himselfe lowly, then to exalt himselfe on high, and after to die shamefully: for it is a common saying, Whoso mounteth higher then he should, falleth suddenly lower then he would.

The third Fable is of the two Creuisses.

THe man which will vndertake to teach other, ought first to examine & correct himselfe, as it appeareth by this fable of a Creuisse, which would haue chastised her owne daughter, because that she went not right, and said to her, My daughter, it pleaseth me not that yee goe thus backward, for thereby thou maist come to some harme. And the daughter said to her, My mother, I shall goe right and forward with a good will, if ye will goe before to shew me the way. But the mother could goe none otherwise but after her kind, wherefore the daughter said to her, My mother, learne first your selfe for to goe right and forward, and then ye may teach me. Wherefore he that will teach other, ought first to shew good example himselfe, for great shame it is for a Doctor to haue his owne faults accuse him.

The fourth Fable is of the Asse and the Lyons skin.

NOne ought to glory in the goods of other, as rehearseth this Fable of an Asse, which sometime

time found the ſkinne of a Lyon, which he did weare on him, but he could neuer hide his eares therewith. And when he was (as he ſuppoſed) well araied with the ſaid ſkinne, he ran into the foreſt, and when the wilde beaſts ſaw him come, they were fearefull and began to flye, for they thought it had beene the Lyon. And the maſter of the Aſſe ſought his Aſſe vp and downe in euery place, and when he had long ſought him, he thought he would goe to the foreſt, and as he was in the foreſt, he met his Aſſe arayed as is before ſaid. But his maſter which had ſought him ſo long, ſaw his eares, whereby he knew him well, and anon he tooke him, and ſaid in this manner: Ha ha maſter Aſſe, are ye clothed with the Lyons ſkin? thou makeſt the beaſts afraid, but if they knew thee as well as I doe, they would not feare thee, but I aſſure thee that well I ſhall beate thee for this. Then he tooke from him the ſkinne of the Lyon and ſaid to him, Lyon thou ſhalt be no more, but Aſſe ſhalt thou euer be, and his maſter ſo beat him with a cudgell, that euer after he remembred it. Therefore he which aduanceth himſelfe of other mens goods, is a very foole, for as men ſay commonly, he is not well arayed, which is clothed with another mans gowne.

The fift Fable is of the Frogge and the Foxe.

IT is great folly for any man to attempt to doe that which he cannot doe, as by this fable appeareth. A Frogge ſometime came out of a ditch, and preſumed to leape vpon a high Mountaine, and when the

ſhe was vpon the high mountaine, ſhe ſaid to the other beaſts, I am a Miſtreſſe in medicine, and can giue remedy to all manner of ſickneſs by my art and ſubtilty, and ſhall render you good health, whereof ſome beleeued her. Then the Fore which perceiued the fooliſh beleefe of the beaſts, began to laugh and ſaid to them. Poore beaſts, how may this foule and venimous beaſt which is ſick and pale of colour, render and giue to you health? for the Leach that will heale ſome other, ought firſt to helpe himſelfe; for many counterfeit the Leach, which cannot a word of the Science of medicine, from the which I pray God to keepe.

The 6. Fable is of the Dogge.

HE that is vaineglorious of that which ſhould humble him, is a very foole, as by this Fable moſt plainely appeareth. There was a man which had two dogs, of the which one without barking vſed to bite the folke, and the other barked, but did not bite. And when the maſter of the houſe perceiued the malice of the dogge which barked not, hee hung about his neck a bel, to the end that men ſhould beware of him: Wherefore this Dogge was very proud hereof and began to diſpraiſe all other dogges: for the which one of the moſt ancient ſaid vnto him, O fooliſh beaſt, now perceiue I well thy folly and great madneſſe, in thinking that this Bell is giuen thee for thine owne deſert and merite, for certainly it is not ſo, but it is taken to thee for demerite, and becauſe of thy chrewdnes and great treaſon, for to ſhew that thou art falſe, and a traytour. Whereby we learne, that none ought to be ioyfull of that thing,

whereof he ought to be sorrowfull, as many fooles be: for a great foole were that theefe, which being led to be hanged, with a cord of gold about his necke, if he should make ioy thereof, although the cord were very rich and costly.

The seuenth fable, is of the Cammell and of Iupiter.

EVery creature ought to be content with that that God hath giuen him, without taking the inheritance of others, as appeareth by this fable of a Cammell which sometime complained to Iupiter, of the other beasts that mocked him, because he was not beautifull as they were, wherfore instantly he prayed to Iupiter in this manner: Faire sir and mighty god, I pray thee that thou wilt giue me hornes, that I may be no more mocked. Iupiter then begunne to laugh, and in stead of hornes, he tooke from him his eares, saying, Thou hast more good then it behoueth thee to haue, and because thou demandest that which thou oughtest not to haue, I haue taken from thee that which thou oughtest to haue: For no man ought to desire more then he ought to haue, lest he thereby leese that which he hath.

Fable viii. of two fellowes.

MEn ought not to hold fellowship with him which is accustomed to beguile other, as appeareth by this present fable of two fellowes which sometime held fellowship together, to goe both by mountaines & vallies: and for to make better their voyage, they were sworne each to other, that none of them both should leaue other vntil death should part them. And as they walked in a Forrest, they

they met with a great wild Beare, and they both ran away, for feare of the which, one of them climed vp into a tree; and when the other saw that his fellow was gone and left him, he laied himselfe down on the earth, and fained him to be dead. Incontinent the Beare came for to eate him, but because the gallant plaid well his game, the Beare went forth on his way and toucht him not: and then his fellow came downe from the tree and said vnto him, I pray thee tell me what the Beare said to thee: and his fellow said, He taught me many faire secrets, but among all other things he said to me, That I should neuer trust him which hath once deceiued me.

Fable ix. of two Pots.

The poore ought not to take the rich for his fellow, as appeareth by this fable of two Pots, of which one was of copper, & the other of earth, the which did mete together in a riuer, and because that the earthen pot went swifter then did the copper pot, the copper pot said, I pray thee let vs goe together, and the earthen pot answered, I will not goe with thee, for if thou shouldest chance to hit me, thou wouldst breake me in pieces. Therefore the poore is a foole that compareth himselfe with the rich, for better it is to liue in pouerty, then to die villainously and be oppressed of the rich.

Fable x. of the Lyon and the Bull.

Ire serueth not a man alwaies to reuenge himselfe vpon him that hath done him any iniury:

as appeareth by this preſent fable, of a Bull which ſometime fled before a Lyon, and as the Bull would haue entered into a tauerne for to ſaue him, a Goate came againſt him to let him that he ſhould not enter, to whom the Bull ſaid: It is not time now to auenge me on thee, for the Lyon chaſeth me, but the time ſhall come that I ſhall finde thee out. Wherefore that man is not wiſe, which to be preſently reuenged on his enemy, will bring himſelfe into more perill and danger.

The 11. Fable is of the Ape and his ſonne.

THere is no greater folly then for a man to praiſe himſelfe, as rehearſeth this preſent Fable, of Iupiter chiefe of the gods, which made all the beaſts and birds for to be aſſembled together for to know their kind. Therewith came forth the Ape, which preſented his ſonne to Iupiter ſaying thus: Faire ſir, and mighty god, looke and ſee here the faireſt beaſt that euer thou createdſt in this world. Hereat Iupiter began to laugh, ſaying vnto him: Thou art a foule beaſt thus for to praiſe thy ſelfe. For none ought to praiſe himſelfe, but ought to doe good and vertuous works, for the which other men may giue him praiſe and commendation.

The 12. Fable is of the Crane and the Peacocke.

THough a man be neuer ſo excellent in any ſcience, yet it is folly in him to prayſe himſelfe, as appeareth by this fable, of a Peacocke which ſometime made a dinner to a Crane, and when they had eaten and dronken enough, they had much talke together: wherefore the Peacocke ſaid to the Crane,

Thou

Thou haſt not ſo faire a forme, nor ſo faire feathers as I haue. To whom the Crane anſwered & ſaid, It is truth: neuertheleſſe, thou haſt not one ſo good and faire a vertue as I haue. For albeit that I haue not ſo faire feathers as thou haſt, yet I can flye better then thou thy ſelfe canſt, for with thy faire feathers thou muſt euer abide on the earth, but I can flye euen where it pleaſeth me. Thus euery one ought to be content with that gift which nature hath beſtowed on him, without making any vaine boaſt thereof.

Fable 13. of the Hunter and the Tyger.

FArre worſe is the ſtroake of a tongue, then the wound of a ſpeare, as appeareth by this preſent Fable: Of a Hunter which with his arrowes hurt the wild beaſts in ſuch wiſe that none eſcaped him: to the which beaſts a Tygre fierce and hardy ſaid in this manner. Be not afraid ſo, for I ſhall keepe you well. And as the Tygre came to the wood, the hunter was hid within a buſh, and when he ſaw the Tygre paſſe before him, he ſhot at him an arrow and hit him in the thigh, whereof the Tygre was greatly abaſhed, and weeping and ſore ſighing, ſaid to the other Beaſts, I wot not from whence this commeth vnto me. And when the Fox ſaw him ſo greatly abaſhed, all laughing he ſaid vnto him, Ha ha Tygre, thou art wonderfull mighty and ſtrong. Then the Tygre ſaid to him, My ſtrength auaileth me not at this time, for none may keep himſelfe from treaſon. And therefore ſome ſecret is heere which I knew not before. Yet notwithſtanding, this I may well auouch, that there is no worſe arrow, nor

that hurteth a man more then the arrow that is shot from an euill tongue. For when some person proffereth or saith some word in the fellowship of some honest men of good life, all the fellowship supposeth that that which this euill tongue hath said; is true, albeit that it be but leasing. But notwithstanding the good man shall euer be wounded of the same arrow, which wound shall be vncurable. And if it were the stroake of a speare, it might bee with a Surgion healed, because that incontinent as the word is spoken, he that said it, is no more master of it. And for this cause the stroake of the tongue is most dangerous and vncurable.

Fable xiiii. of the foure Oxen.

MEn ought not to breake their faith with their good friend, nor to leaue his fellowship, as it appeareth by this fable of foure Oxen which were all in a faire greene meddow. And because that they euer kept them together, none other beast durst assaile them, and also the Lyon dreaded them much. The which Lyon on a day came to them, and by his deceiueable words thought for to beguile them, and to take them the better, made them to be separated each from other: and when they were separated, the Lyon went and tooke one of them, and when the Lyon would haue strangled him, the Ore said vnto him, Gossip, hee is a fole that beléeueth false and deceiueable words, and leaueth the fellowship of his good friend; for if we had béene euer together, thou hadst not taken me: and therefore he which is safe & standeth well and sure, ought to looke to himselfe that he

he fall not through his owne folly.

Fable xv. of the Bush and the Auber tree.

NOne for his beauty ought to dispraise any other, for sometime such a one as is faire, soone wareth soule, and from high falleth low, as it appeareth by this Fable, of a faire tree which mocked and scorned a little bush, and said: Seest thou not the faire beauty of me? With me men edifie and build faire houses, palaces, castles, galleies, and diuers other ships for to saile on the sea, thus hee aduanced and praised himselfe. Then came there a Labourer with his axe for to hew and smite him to the ground. And as the Labourer smote vpon the faire tree, the bush said, Certainly my brother, if thou wert as little as I am, men should not hew ne smite thee to the ground. Wherefore none ought to reioyce himselfe of his Worship, for he that is now in great honour and worship, hereafter may fall into as great shame and dishonor.

Fable xvi. of the Fisher, and the little Fish.

MEn ought not to leaue the thing that is sure and certaine, in hope of the vncertaine, as to vs rehearseth this Fable, of a Fisher which with his line tooke a little fish; which said to him, My friend, I pray thee that thou wilt not put me to death, for now I am taught to eate, but when I shall be greater, if thou come hither, of me thou shalt haue more good, for then I shall serue thee a good while. And the fisher said, Sith that I now haue thee, thou shalt not so escape from mee, for great folly it were in me to seeke thee here another time. For men may

not to let goe that whereby they be sure, hoping to haue afterward that which is vncertaine.

Fable 17. of Phœbus, the auaricious and the couetous Man.

NOne ought to damage himself, to the end he may hurt another the more, as it appeareth by this fable of Iupiter which sent Phœbus into the earth, to haue all the knowledge of the thought of men. This Phœbus chanced to meet with two men, of the which one was enuious, and the other right couetous. Phœbus demaded of them what their thought was. We think, said they, to demand of thee great gifts. To the which Phœbus answered, Demand now what ye will, for all that ye shall aske mee, I shall grant it you; and of that which the first shall aske, the second shall haue double, or as much more againe. And then the auaricious said, I will that my fellow aske what he will first: whereof the enuious was well content, and said vnto Phœbus, Faire sir, I pray thee that I may leese one of mine eyes. Wherefore Phœbus began to laugh, and departed againe to Iupiter, and told him the great malice of the enuious, which was ioyfull and glad of the harme and damage of another, and how he was content to suffer paine, for to damage some other.

Fable 18. of the theefe, and the child that wept.

HE is a foole that putteth his goods in ieopardie to be lost, in hope to get more; as appeareth by this Fable, of a theefe which found a child weeping beside a Well, of whom the theefe demanded why he

he wept. And the child answered, I wepe because I haue let fall into this Well a bucket of gold. And then the theefe tooke off his clothes, and laid them on the ground, and went downe into the Well: and when he was downe, the child tooke his clothes and went away, leauing him in the Well. Wherefore none ought to leaue that which he hath, in hope for to get that which he hath not: and those things neuer come to good, which are gotten by bad meanes.

Fable 20. of the Lyon and the Goate.

THat man is wise which can keepe himselfe from the wily and false, as appeareth by this Fable: Of a Lyon which met with a Goate which was vpon a Mountaine: and when the Lyon saw her, he said to her in this manner, for to giue her occasion to come downe from the hill, to the end that he might eate her. My sister, why commest thou not hither into this faire greene meddow, for to eate of these faire hearbes or grasse? And the Goate answered him, Albeit that thou sayest truth, yet neuertheless sith thou speakest it not neither for my good nor profit, but onely that thou mightest eate and deuoure me, I meane not to trust thy faire speeches: for many times I haue heard say of my damme, He that is well, let him not seeke to amend himselfe: and he which is in a sure place, is a foole if he goe from it, and put himselfe in danger and perill, in hope of better fortune.

Fable

The xxi. Fable, of the Crowe which was athirſt.

BEtter is wit then force, as rehearſeth this Fable, of a Crow which came to drinke out of a bucket, and becauſe that ſhe might not reach to the water, ſhee filled the Bucket with ſmall ſtones, inſomuch that the water came vpwards, whereof ſhe did drinke at pleaſure. Whereby we vnderſtand, that wiſedome is more to be commended then any worldly might, and by Sapience men may reſiſt great euils.

The xxii. Fable, of the villaine, and of the youg Bull.

HE which is of an euill nature, ſhall haue great paine to amend his conditions, as appeareth by this fable, of a villaine which had a young bull, the which he might not bind, becauſe that euer he ſmote with his hornes, wherefore the villaine cut off his hornes. But when he would haue bound him, the Bull caſt his feet from him, in ſuch wiſe that he ſuffered no man to come neere him. And when the villaine perceiued the malice of the Bull, he ſaid vnto him, I ſhall chaſtiſe thee well enough, for I ſhall put thee into the Butchers hands: and then the Bull indeed was chaſtiſed. Thus ought men to doe with wicked and rebellious people, which giue themſelues to all kinde of euill, namely, to put them into the hangmans hands, and to let him be their butcher to rule them, for otherwiſe their accuſtomed conditions will more and more ſpread, to the corrupting of better diſpoſed perſons among whom they liue.

The

The xii. Fable, is of the Palmer and of the Satyre.

MEn ought to beware of them which beare both fire and water, as rehearseth this fable. Of a Pilgrime which walked in the Winter thorow a great Forrest, and because that the Snow had couered all the wayes, he wist not whither he went. Against whom came a woodwose named Satyre, because he saw him cold; which approached to the Pilgrim, and brought him to his pit: and when the Pilgrim saw him, he had great dread, because that a woodwose is a monster like a man. And as this Satyre led this Pilgrime into a pit, the Pilgrim did blow his hands for to heate them, for he was sore a-cold: & the woodwose gaue him hot water to drinke, and when the Pilgrim would haue drunke it, he began to blow it. And the woodwose demaunded of him, why he did blow it. And the Pilgrime said, I blow it to make somewhat more cold. The woodwose then said to him, Thy fellowship is not good for me, because that thou beareſt both fire and water in thy mouth: Therefore goe hence from my pitte, and neuer returne againe: for the fellowship of the man which hath two tongues is naught. Wherefore the man that is wise, ought to flie the fellowship of flatterers, for by flattering and adulation, many haue béne deceiued.

The xxiii. Fable is of the Oxe and of the Rat.

LOrds ought to loue their subiects, for he which is hated of his tenants and subiects, is not Lord of his

his lands. As it appeareth by this present fable, of an Oxen which sometime was within a stable, and as the Oxen on a time would faine haue slept, a Ratte came & bit him by the thighes, and as the Oxe would haue smitten him, he ranne away into his hole. And then the Oxe began to menace the Rat, and the Rat said to him, I am not afraid of thee, albeit I am little, I may impeach thee. And if thou art great, thank thy parents because thereof and not thy selfe; and therefore the strong ought not to dispraise the little, but to loue him, as the chiefe or head ought to loue his limmes: for he that loueth not, ought not to be loued: and therefore the Lord must loue his subiects, if of them he would be loued.

Fable 14. of the Goose and her Lord.

He that seeketh to get more then he ought, oft-times getteth nothing, as saith this fable, of a man which had a Goose that laide euery day an egge of gold. The man, of couetousnesse commanded her that euery day she should lay two egges. And she said to him, Certainly my master I may not. Wherefore the man was wroth with her, and slew her: by meanes whereof he lost his former profit, and afterward waxed very sorrowfull: Howbeit it was not time to shut the stable doore when the horses be gone: and he is not wise which ouer-rashly doth any thing whereof he shall repent him afterward, nor he that hurteth himselfe to be auenged on some other. For because he supposed to win all, he lost all.

Fable

Fable 25. of the old Ape and her two children.

HE that sometimes the parents doth dispraise, oftentimes prooueth the best child, as appeareth by this Fable, of an Ape which had two children, of the which she hated the one and loued the other, and that she loued she tooke in her armes and fled before the dogges. And when the other saw that his mother left him behind, he ran and leapt on her backe, and by reason that the little Ape which she held in her armes hindered her flight, she let it fall to the ground, and the other which the mother hated, held fast on her backe and was saued, the which from henceforth kissed and embraced his mother, and she then began greatly to loue him. Wherefore many times it happeth, that thing which is dispraised and hated, is better then that thing which is loued and praised. And many times the children which be praised and loued, doe lesse good then they which be dispraised and hated.

Fable 26. of the Winde and the earthen Pot.

THe man that ouermuch exalteth himselfe, shall be abased, as appeareth by this fable, of a Potter which made a great pot of earth, which he set in the sun, that it might the better dry, and against this pot there came a great wind. And when the wind saw the Pot, he demaunded, Who art thou? and

and the Pot answered, I am a pot the best made that can be found, and none may impeach me. How said the Winde? Thou art yet all soft, and hast neither vertue ne force, and because I know thy great pride, I shall breake thee in pieces, to the end that thou maist haue knowledge of thy great pride. And therefore the feble ought to be meke, and humble himselfe, and shew obeisance to his Lord, and not to exalt himselfe more then he ought, to the end that he be not abased.

Fable xxvii. of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

Of two euils men ought euer to eschew the worst, if any of them may be eschewed, as it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe which ran after a Lambe, the which Lambe fled into the house whereas the Goates were; and when the Wolfe saw that he might in no wise take the Lambe, he said to him by sweet words, Leaue thy fellowship, and come with me into the fields: for if thou come not, thou shalt be taken with them, and being taken, shalt be sacrificed to their gods. And the Lambe answered to the Wolfe, I had rather to shed all my blood for the loue of the gods, and to be sacrificed to them, then to be beaten and deuoured of thee. And therefore he is full of wisdome and prudence, who of two great euils, may escape the greatest of both.

Here end the Fables of Auian.

Here

Here follow the pleaſant Fables of Alfonce.

The firſt Fable is of the exhortation of Sapience and loue.

ARabe of Lucane ſaid to his ſonne in this manner: My ſonne, beware that the Ant be no more prudent then thy ſelfe, which gathereth and aſſembleth together in the Sommer, al he needeth to haue in the winter, & beware that thou ſleepe no longer then the Cock doth, which watcheth and awaketh early in the morning, and that he be not wiſer then thy ſelfe, which ruleth and gouerneth nine Hennes. But it ſufficeth that thou rule and gouerne one well: and alſo that the dogge be not more noble then thy ſelfe, which forgetteth not that good which is done to him, but euer he remembreth it. Beſides, my ſonne, ſuppoſe it not a ſmall matter to haue a good friend, but doubt not to haue a thouſand friends. And when Arabe would dye, he demanded this queſtion of his ſonne, ſaying: My ſonne, how many good friends haſt thou? And the Sonne anſwered his Father, and ſaid, My father, I haue as I ſuppoſe many to be my friends. Then ſaid his father, Account none to be thy friends vnleſſe thou haſt well aſſaied and proued them before. For I aſſure thee, I haue lined longer in this world then thou haſt, and yet I haue gotten ſcarcely halfe a Friend, wherefore I maruaile much how thou

thou haſt gotten ſo many friends. And then the ſonne ſeeing the admiration or wonder of his Father, demanded of him, My father, I pray you giue me your counſell, how I ſhall now aſſay my Friend. And his father ſaid to him, Go thou and kill a Calfe, and put it in a ſacke all bloody, and beare it to thy firſt Friend, and ſay to him, It is a man which thou haſt ſlaine, and deſire him for the loue which he beareth to thee, that he will keepe thy miſdeeds ſecretly, and bury it, to the end that thou maiſt be ſaued: this counſell his ſonne followed: to whom his friend ſaid, Returne againe, for within my houſe thou ſhalt not enter, if thou haue done euill, I will not beare the penalty of it. And thus one after another he aſſaied all his friends, and euery one of them anſwered him as the firſt; whereof he was greatly abaſhed, & returned againe to his father, and told him how he had ſped: and his father ſaid, Many be friends in words, but few in deeds, but I ſhall tell thee what thou ſhalt doe. Goe thou to my halfe friend, & beare to him thy calfe, and thou ſhalt heare what he will ſay to thee. When the ſonne came to the halfe friend of his Father, hee ſaid to him as he did to the other. And when the halfe friend vnderſtood the matter, he tooke him ſecretly into his houſe, and led him into an obſcure place for to bury his dead calfe, whereby the Sonne knew the truth of the halfe friends loue. Then the ſonne of the Arabe turned againe to his Father, and told him all that his halfe friend had done to him. Then the Father ſaid to his ſonne, that the Philoſopher ſaid, that the true friend is found in extreme neede: Then demanded the ſon of his Father, Saweſt thou neuer a man

man which in his life time did get a whole friend? And his Father replyed and sayd, I neuer saw any, but I haue heard of such a one: and the Sonne answered, My father, I pray thee that thou wilt reueale it to me, to the end that by aduenture I may get such a one. Then the father said vnto his sonne after this manner: My Sonne, sometime I haue heard of two Merchants which neuer beheld each other, the one was of Egypt, and the other of Baldocke, but they had certaine knowledge each of other by their Letters, which they wrote friendly one to the other. It so befell that the Merchant of Baldocke came into Egypt to cheapen & buy some ware, whereof his friend was glad, and went to meet him, and brought him louingly to his house. And after he had cherred and refreshed him by the space of fourteene dayes, the same merchant of Baldocke became very sicke, wherof his friend was rightly sorrowfull, and incontinent sent for the best Physicions and Leaches that were in all Egypt, to recouer his health: and when the Physicions had seene and visited him, and well regarded his vrine, they said that he had no bodily sickneſſe, but that he was rauished with loue: and when his friend heard these words, he came vnto him, and said, My friend, I pray thee that thou shew me thy sickneſſe: then his friend said to him, I pray thee that thou wilt bring hither all the women and maidens that be in thy house, to see if she that my heart most desireth be amongst them: And anon his friend brought before him, both his owne daughters, and all his seruants, amongst whom was a faire young Maiden which he had nourished for his

pleasure. And when the sicke man saw her, he sayd to his friend, This same is she which may be the onely cause of my life or death: which his friend hearing, gaue her vnto him to be his wife, with all such good as he had of hers; whom hee wedded, and returned vnto Baldocke, with great ioy. But within a while after, it fortuned so that this Merchant of Egypt fell into great pouerty, and to haue some consolation or comfort, he tooke his iourney towards Baldocke, and supposed to goe and see his friend, and euen about one of the clocke he arriued in the cittie; and insomuch as he was not well arrayed, he was ashamed by day light to goe into the house of his friend, but went and lodged him within the Temple nigh to his friends house. It hapned then that on the same night that he lay there, there was a man slaine before the gate of the same Temple: wherefore the neighbours were sore troubled, and the people mooued therewith, went into the Temple, where they found no body saue onely the Egyptian, the which they tooke, and demanded of him whether he had slaine the man which lay dead before the Portall of the Temple. He then seeing his mis-fortune and ponertie, confessed he had killed the man, for because of his euill chance, he would rather die than liue: whereupon he was led before a Judge, and was condemned to be hanged. And as men led him towards the gallowes, his friends saw him and knew him, and beganne to weepe, remembring the benefits that hee had done vnto him: forthwith he went vnto the Iustice, and said: My Lord, this man did not the murder, for it was my selfe that did it, and therefore you should

should doe great sinne, if you doe put this guiltlesse man to death. And anon hee was taken to be had to the gallowes. And the Egyptian said, My Lord he did it not, And therefore euill should you doe to put him to death. And as the two friends would haue beene hanged each for other, hee which had done the murther indeede, came and confessed there openly the fact, and addressed himselfe before the Iustice and sayd, My Lord, none of them both haue done the deede, and therefore punish not these innocents, for I alone ought to beare the paine. Whereat the Iustice greatly maruelled, and for the doubt which therin was great, the Iustice tooke them all three, and led them before the King. And when they had rehearsed to the King all the manner, after enquest thereupon made, and that he knew the truth of it, he granted his grace to the murtherer, and so all the three were deliuered. Then the friend brought his friend to his house, and receiued him ioyfully, and after gaue vnto him both siluer and gold, and the Egyptian returned againe to his house. And when the Father had rehearsed all this, his sonne said to him, My father, I know well that he that may get a good friend is happy, and with great labour I suppose I shall finde such a one.

The ii. Fable is of money deliuered to keepe.

A Spaniard arriued sometime in the Land of Egypt, and because that hee feared to be robbed passing through the desart of Arabia, he thought in himselfe, that it were wisely done to deliuer his mo-

ney to some true man, to kéepe vntill his returne a-gaine. And because that he had heard some say, that within the City was a true man, he went anon vnto him, and tooke to him his siluer for to kéepe it. And when hee had done his voyage, hee came againe to him, and demanded of him his siluer: and hee answered him in this manner: My friend, I know not who thou art, for I neuer saw thée before that I wot of, and if thou sayest or speakest any moe words, I shall make thee to be well beaten. Then was the Spaniard sorowfull and wroth, and thereof he made a complaint to his neighbours, and the neighbours said vnto him, Certainely we be greatly abashed of that ye tell vs, for he is among vs all reputed & holden for a good man and a true, and therefore returne againe vnto him, and with faire words demand of him that he may render vnto thee thy coyne againe: the which thing he did. And the old man answered him more sharply and more rigorously then hee had done before, wherewith the Spaniard was wonderfully wroth: and as he departed out of the old mans house, he met with an old woman, the which demanded of him the cause why hée was so troubled and heauie. And after he had told her the cause why, the old woman said vnto him: Make good chére, for if it be as thou saiest, I shall giue thée counsell how thou shalt recouer thy siluer. Then he demanded of her, how it might be done: she replied vnto him, bring hitherto me a man of thy Country whom thou trustest, and cause faire chests to be made, and fill them all with stones, and by thy fellowes thou shalt cause them to be borne into his house, and to him they shall say,

ſay, that a Marchant of Spaine ſent them vnto him for to keepe ſurely: and when the cheſts ſhall be within his houſe, thou ſhalt goe againe and demand of him thy ſiluer. Which thing he did, and as the ſaid cheſts were borne into his houſe, the Spaniards went with them that bare them, and ſaid vnto the old man in this manner, My friend, theſe foure cheſts bee all full of gold, ſiluer, and precious ſtones, which we bring to you, as to the truſtieſt and faithfulleſt man that we know, for to keepe them ſurely, becauſe that we feare the theeues that be in the deſart. After the which words ſaid, came he which the old woman had counſelled, and demanded of the old man his ſiluer. And becauſe that the old man feared that the Spaniard would haue diſpraiſed him, he ſaid, Thou art welcome, I maruell why thou tarrieſt ſo long ere thou cameſt, & incontinent he reſtored to him his ſiluer: and thus by the counſell of the old Woman which he greatly thanked, he had his goods againe, and returned into his owne countrey.

The iii. Fable ſpeaketh of the ſubtill inuention of a ſentence, giuen vpon a darke and obſcure cauſe.

OF a time it befell, that a good man a Labourer died, leauing nothing to his ſonnes, but onely a houſe, the which Sonne liued by the labour of his hands very poorely. This young man had a rich neighbour, which demanded of him if he would ſell his houſe. But he ſaid no, becauſe it was come to him by inheritance. Wherefore the ſaid rich man his neighbor, conuerſed ought with him to deceiue him:

but the young man fled his company as much as he might. And the rich man perceiuing that the young man fled his company, he bethought him of a great deceit, and requested of the poore young man, that he would let to him part of his house to delue and make a Celler, which he would hold of him for yearely rent: & the poore man let it him. And when the Celler was made, the rich man brought into it tenne tunnes of Dyle, of the which fiue were full of Dyle, and the other fiue were but halfe full: and he made a great pit in the earth, and put the fiue tunnes that were halfe full in it, and the other fiue vpon them; and shut the doore of the Celler, and deliuered vp the key to the poore young man, and requested him (fraudulently) to keepe well his Dyle: but the poore young man knew not the malice and falshood of his neighbour, wherefore he was content to keepe the key. And within a while after, as the Dyle became deare, the rich man came to the poore man, and asked of him his goods, and the young man gaue him the key. This rich man sold to the Marchants, his Dyle, and warranted each Tunne full. And when the Merchants measured the Dyle, they found but fiue of the tenne tunnes full, whereof the rich man demanded of the poore young man restitution. And for to haue his house, he made him come before the Iudge. And so when the poore man was come before the Iudge, he demaunded time and space for to answere, for hee thought that he had kept well and truly the Dyle: and the Iudge granted him a day. And then went he to a Philosopher which was Procuratour for the poore people, & prayed him for charity that he would

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giue to him good counsell at his nede. And he rehearsed and told vnto him all his case, and swore vpon the holy Euangelist that he tooke none of the rich mans Dyle. And then the Philosopher answered to him in this manner, My sonne, haue no feare, for the truth may not faile: and the next morrow after the Philosopher went with the poore man before the iudgement seate. and the same Philosopher was constituted by the King for to giue the iust sentence of it. And after that the cause had bene well defended, and pleaded of both parties, the Philosopher said, This same rich man is of good renowne, and I suppose not that he demanded more then he should haue. Also I beleeue not that this poore man is guilty of the blame which he putteth on him: but notwithstanding, for to know the truth of it, I ordaine and giue this sentence, that the Dyle pure and cleane of the fiue Tunnes which are full be measured, and also the Lées thereof, and after that the pure and cleane Dyle of the fiue Tunnes which be but halfe full, be also measured, with the Lées thereof, and then looke if the Lées of the fiue Tunnes but halfe full, be equall to the Lées of the other fiue Tunnes which were wholy full; and if it be so by measuring truly, that lesse be found within these vessels which be but halfe full, then in the other, it shall be thereby sufficiently proued, that no Dyle hath bene taken out of them: but if there be fonnd as much Lées in the one as in the other, the poore man shall be condemned. And of this sentence the poore young man was well content, & by measuring as afore said the troth was knowne: Wherefore the poore man was

quit, and the rich man was condemned, & his great malice and falshood knowne, for there is no sinne or misdeed done, but that once it shall be manifested.

Fable iiii. of the sentence giuen vpon the money which was found.

A Rich man sometime went by a citie, and as he walked from one side to another, a great purse fell from him, wherein were a thousand crownes, the which a poore man found, and tooke them to his wife to keepe, whereof shee was full glad, and said: thanked be God for all his goodnes which he sendeth to vs, if he send now the great summe, keepe it well. And vpon the morrow after, the rich man made to be cryed thorow the citie, that whosoeuer had found a thousand crowns in a purse, he should restore them to him againe, and that he should haue for his reward a hundred of them. And when this poore man heard the cry, he came incontinent to his wife, and said to her. My wife, that which we haue found must be restored againe, for it is far better to haue a hundred crownes without sinne, then a thousand wrongfully: and though that the woman would haue resisted, yet in the end shee was content. And thus the poore man restored the thousand crownes to the rich man, and demanded of him his hundred crownes: But the rich man full of falshood said to the poore man, thou rendrest not to me my gold which thou didst find, for of it I lacke foure hundred pieces of gold, and when thou shalt bring me againe the same foure hundred pieces of gold, thou shalt haue of mee the hundred crownes which I promised thee. The poore man answered, I haue brought thee all that I haue found,

found, wherefore they fell into great strife, insomuch that the cause was brought before the King to bee decided. Wherefore the King called before him a great Philosopher, which was Procuratour for the people. And when the cause was will disputed, the Philosopher mooued with pitty, called the poore man and said vnto him, Come hither, my friend, By thy faith hast thou restored all the money which thou foundest in the purse? And the poore man answered, Yea sir by my faith. Then the Philosopher said before the assistance: Sith this rich man is true and faithfull, & that it is not to be thought that he would demand more then he ought to haue: and on the other part, men must beleeue that this poore man is knowne for an honest and true man: therefore this is my sentence, That thou sir King take the thousand crownes, and that thou give a hundred of them to this poore man which found them, and after, when he that hath lost them shall come, thou shalt restore them to him: and if it happen that another finde the thousand foure hundred crownes, they shall be rendred againe vnto this good man which is here present, which saith that he hath lost them. The which sentence was agreeable and pleasing to all the company. And when the rich man saw that he was deceiued by his owne folly, he desired mercy and grace of the King, saying: Sir, this poore man that hath found my purse, hath truly restored to me all that I ought to haue, but certainely I would haue deceiued him; wherefore I pray thee that thou wilt take pittie one me. And then the King had mercy on him, and the poore man was well contented and paide,

and

and all the malice of the rich man was knowne.

The fift Fable is of the faith of three fellowes.

OFt it hapneth, that the euill which is procured to other, commeth vnto him which procureth it, as it appeareth by three fellowes, of the which twaine were Burgesses, and the third a Labourer, the which being assumed together for to goe to the holy Sepulcher, these three fellowes made great prouision of floure for their pilgrimage, in such wise that it was all consumed, except onely for to make one loafe. And when the Burgesses saw the end of their floure, they said, If we finde not some meanes for to beguile this villaine, because that he is a right great eater, we shall surely die for hunger; wherefore we must deuise a way that we may haue the Loafe, which shall be made of all our floure. And therefore they concluded together, and said, When the Loafe shall be put into the Ouen, we shall goe and lay vs downe to sleepe, and he that shall dreame best, the loafe shall be his. And because that we both be subtill and wise, he shall not dreame so well as we shall, wherefore the loafe shall be ours: whereof all three were well content, and all began to sleepe. But when the Labourer perceiued all their deceit, and saw that his fellowes were asleepe, hee went and drew the loafe out of the Ouen, and ate it, and after he fained himselfe to be asleepe: and then one of the Burgesses rose vp, and said to his fellowes, I haue dreamed a wonderfull dreame, for two Angels haue taken and borne me with great ioy before the diuine Maiestie. And the other Burgesse awoke, and said, Thy dreame

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is wonderfull, but I suppose that mine is farre fairer then thine is: for I dreamed that two Angels drew me on hard ground, for to lead me into hell. And after they did awake the villaine, which as dreadfull said, who is here? and they answered, We bee thy fellowes. And he said to them, how be ye so soone returned? and they said, we departed not yet from hence. And he said to them, by my faith I dreamed that the Angels had led one of you into heauen, and the other into hell. Wherefore I supposed that you should neuer haue come againe, and therefore I arose vp from sleepe, and because I was hungry, I drew the loafe out of the Ouen and ate it. Thus oft it happeth, that he which supposeth to beguile another, is beguiled himselfe.

The xi. Fable is of the Labourer and the Nightingale.

THere was sometime a Labourer which had a garden that was very pleasant, into the which he oft went for his disport and pleasure, and one day at euen, when he was weary, and had trauailed sore, for to take his recreation, he entred into his garden, and set himselfe downe vnder a tree, where he heard the song of the Nightingale. And for the great pleasure and ioy which he tooke thereof, he sought, and at the last found the meanes to take the Nightingale, to the end that he might haue greater ioy and pleasure of her afterward. And when she was taken, she demanded of the Labourer, Wherefore hast thou taken so great paine to take me? for well thou wottest thou maiest haue no great profit by me. And the

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Labourer answered thus to the Nightingale, for to heare thee sing I have taken thee, and the Nightingale answered, Certainly, in vaine thou hast laboured, for no good will I sing while I am in prison. Then the Labourer answered, if thou singest not well, I shall eate thee. And then the Nightingale said, If thou put me within a pot for to bee sodden, little meate shalt thou have of my body: and if thou settest me to be rosted, there shall be lesse, and therefore boyled nor rosted thou shalt not fill thy belly of me; but if thou let me flie I shall do thee great good; for three things I shall teach thee, which thou shalt loue better then three fat Kine. Then the Labourer let the Nightingale flie. And when shee was out of his hands and that she was vpon a tree, she said to the Labourer, My friend, I have promised thee that I shall teach thee three things, whereof the first is this, that thou beleeue nothing which is impossible: the second is, that thou keepe well that is thine: and the third is, that thou take no sorrow for the thing lost, which may not be recouered. And soone after the Nightingale began to sing, & in her song said thus: Blessed be God which hath deliuered me out of the hands of this villaine or churle, which hath not knowne, seene nor touched the precious Diamond which I have within my belly: for if he had found it he had beene right rich, and from his hands I had not escaped. And the Labourer which heard her song, began to complaine and to make great sorrow, and after said, I am vnhappy that I have lost so faire a treasure. And the Nightingale said to the Labourer, Now know I well that thou art a foole, for thou takest

takeſt griefe for that which thou ſhouldſt haue none: and ſoone thou haſt forgoten my doctrine, becauſe thou ſuppoſeſt that in my belly there ſhould be a pre-cious ſtone, more heauy than I am, and I told and haue taught to thee, thou ſhouldſt neuer beleeue that thing which is vnpoſſible: and if that ſtone were thine, why haſt thou loſt it? and if thou haſt loſt it, and canſt not recouer it, why takeſt thou ſorrow for it? Therefore it is vaine to chaſtice or teach a foole, that will neuer beleeue the doctrine and inſtruction that is taught him.

Fable vii. of the Rhetorician and the crooke-backed.

A Philoſopher ſaid once vnto his ſonne, that when he were fallen by chance into ſome damnage or perill, as ſoone as he might he ſhould deliuer him out of it, to the end that afterward he ſhould be no more vexed therewith, as it appeareth by this fable. Of a certaine Rhethorician, which once demanded of a King, that all of them which ſhould enter into the City, hauing ſome kind of fault in their bodies, as crooked or counterfeited, he might haue of them at the entry of the gate a penny. The which requeſt the King granted, and made his letters to be ſealed, and written vnder his Signet. And he kept them ſtill at the gate, and of euery one that was lame, ſcabbed, or had any deformity on their bodies, he tooke a penny. It hapned on a day, that among the reſt a crook-backed and deformed man would haue entred with-in the city, without giuing any penny, and did put vpon his backe a faire Mantle, and afterward came to the gate. And when the Porter beheld him, hee

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perceiued that he was goggle eyed, and said vnto him: Pay me my duty. And the goggle eyed would pay him nothing, wherefore he tooke from him his mantle; and when he saw that he was crookebacked, he said vnto him, Thou wouldst not before pay me a penny, but now thou shalt pay me twaine. And as they striued together, his hat fell off of his head, & the Porter which saw his scabbed head, sayd vnto him, Now shalt thou pay three pence vnto me. And then the Porter yet againe set his hands vpon him, and felt that his body was all scabbed. And as they were thus wrestling together, the crookebacked fell to the ground, and hurt himselfe fore vpon the legges. And then the Porter said vnto him, thou shalt pay me fiue pence, for thy body is all counterfeited. Wherefore thou shalt leaue here thy mantle: and if thou hadst paide a penny at the first, thou haddest gone on thy way frō and quiet, without any further molestation. Therefore he is wise that payeth that he oweth, to the end that thereof come not to him greater damage.

The seuenth Fable maketh mention of a Disciple and a sheepe.

THere was sometime a Disciple which tooke his pleasure to rehearse and tell many Fables. The Disciple prayed his master to tell him a long fable: the Master answered, Beware it happen not vnto vs as it appeareth by this present Fable, of a King and of his Fabulator. And the Disciple said to his Master; I pray thee tell me how it befell. And the Master said vnto his disciple, There was sometime a King that had a fabulatour, which rehearsed vnto him

him

him oft times when he would sleepe, five Fables to reioyce or make the King merry, and to make him fall asleepe. But it hapned on a day, that the King being heavy and sad, could in no wise fall asleepe. And after the said Fabulator had rehearsed his five Fables, the King desired to heare more. And then the said Fabulator rehearsed unto him three short Fables. And then the King sayd unto him, That he would heare one more longer, and then shall I sleepe. And the Fabulator then rehearsed unto him such a Fable as heere shall be shewed, of a rich man that went to market or faire to buy Sheepe, and which man bought a thousand Sheepe. And as he was returning from the faire, he came to a River; and because of the great water he could not passe over the bridge: nevertheless, he went so long to and fro on the rivage of the said River, that at the last he found a narrow way, upon the which might passe scant three sheepe at once; and thus he passed, and had them over one after another. And hitherto rehearsed of this Fable, the Fabulator fell asleepe: and anone after the King awoke the Fabulator, and sayd to him thus: I pray thee that thou wilt make an end of the Fable which thou hast begunne to tell me: and the Fabulator answered him in this manner: Sir, the River is great, and the sheep are little; Wherefore let the Merchant drive over his sheepe, and after I shall make an end of my Fable. And then was the King pacified. And therefore be thou content with that I have rehearsed unto thee, for there be people so curious in speech, that they cannot be contented with few words.

The

Fable ninth, of the Wolfe, the Fox, and the Cheese.

THere was sometime a Labourer, which could not rule his Oxen, because they smote with their feete: wherefore the Labourer said to them, I pray God the Wolfe may devoure you up all. These words when the Wolfe had heard, he hid himselfe neere thereabout, and then came to eate them. And when night was come, the Labourer unbound his Oxen, and let them goe into his house. And when the wolfe saw the Labourer comming towards him, he said, O thou Labourer, many times in the day thou biddest give me thy Oxen, and therefore keepe thy promise. Then the Labourer said to the Wolfe, I promised thee nought at all. And the Wolfe sayd, I shall not let thee passe untill thou performe thy promise. And as they thus strove and contended both together, they committed the cause to be pleaded before a Judge: and as they went to seeke a Judge, they met a Fox, to whom they declared the cause of their strife. Then sayd the Fox unto them I shall give on your cause a good sentence; but I must speake with each of you apart, and they were content: and the Fox said unto the Labozer, Thou shalt give me a good fat hennе, and another to my wife, and I shall make it so, that thou and all thine Oxen shall goe freely to thine house. Herewith the Labourer was well content, and after the Fox said to the Wolfe, I have well laboured for thee, for the Labourer shall give unto thee a great Cheese, and let him goe home with his Oxen; and the Wolfe was well content. And after the Fox said unto the Wolfe; Come thou with me, and

and I shall leade thée where the chéese is: and then he led him to and fro, here and there, vntill such time that the moone did shine full brightly, and when they came to a Well, the For leapt vpon it, and shewed vnto the Wolfe the shadow of the Moone, which reluced in the Well, and sayd to him, Looke now gossip how that Chéese is faire, great, and broad: haste thee therefore and go downe, & take the faire cheese. Then the Wolfe said to the For, Thou must be the first of both that shall go downe, and if thou mayest not bring it vp with thée because of the greatnesse, I then shall come to helpe thée; and the For was content, because there was a couple of buckets, of the which one went downe, and the other came vp; and the For entred into one of the buckets and descended into the Well, and being downe, he called vnto the Wolfe, saying: Gossip come hither and helpe, for the Cheese is so bigge that I cannot beare it. Then the Wolfe being afraid that the For would eate the Cheese, entred hastily into the other bucket, and as fast as the Wolfe went downe, the For came vp; and when the Wolfe perceiued the For comming, he said vnto him: My gossip, ye goe hence: Thou saist true, said the for, for thus it is with the world, as one commeth downe, the other goeth vp. Thus the for through his subtilty departed, and left the wolfe in the Well: so lost the Wolfe both the Oren and the Chéese. It is not good therefore to leaue that which is certaine, for that which is vncertaine, for many be in like sort deceiued by the falshood and deceit of Aduocates and Iudges.

The tenth Fable, is of the husband, the mother, and the wife.

THere was a merchant that married a young woman which had her mother yet aliue. It hapned that this Merchant went once into a farre Countrey for to buy some ware: and as he was going, hee tooke his wife vnto his mother, to keepe and rule her honestly till he came againe. His wife then by the consent of her mother, enamoured her selfe on a faire young man, which gaue her mony to buy good chere. And as they three made merry, the husband came againe from the faire, and knockt at the doore, wherat they were abashed. Then sayd the Mother vnto them, Feare not, but doe as I shall tell you, and care not: then said she to the young man, take this sword and goe to the gate, and beware you say no word to him, but let me alone: & as the husband would haue entred into the house, seeing the young man holding a naked sword, he was greatly afraid: and then the mother said to him; My sonne, thou art welcome, be not afraid of this man, for three ranne after him for to haue slaine him, and by chance he found the doore open, and this is the cause why he came hither to saue his life. Then the husband said to them, Yee haue done well, and I con you great thanke. Thus went the young man his way safely by the subtilty of the mother and the daughter: to the which trust not thy selfe, if thou be wise.

Fable xi. of an harlot or bawde.

THere was sometime a Gentleman which had a chaste wife, and wonderfull faire, this gentleman would haue gone on pilgrimage to Rome, and left

left his wife at home, because that he knew her for a good and chaste woman: It hapned on a day as she went into the towne, that a faire young man was enamoured on her, and tooke on him hardinesse, and required her of loue, and promised her very many faire gifts. But she was good, & had rather die than consent thereto: wherefore the yong man almost died for sorrow, to the which fellow came an old woman that demaunded of him the cause of his sickenesse. And the young man discouered vnto her all the matter, asking helpe and counsell of her. And the old woman being wily and malicious, said vnto him; Be of good courage, and feare not, for I shall so bring about this feat, that thou shalt haue thy will fulfilled. And after this, the olde bawde went home vnto her owne house, and made a Cat which she had at home to fast three daies one after another, and after that she tooke some bread, with a great quantity of mustard vpon it, and gaue the same vnto her Cat for to eate. And when the Cat smelled it, she began for to weepe and cry. And the old woman went vnto the house of the young woman, and bare her little Cat with her, the which good and young woman, receiued and welcommed her very honestly, because that all the towne held her for a godly woman: and as they were talking together, the young woman had pitty of the Cat which wept, and demanded of the old woman what the Cat ayled. And the old woman said to her, Ha my faire daughter, renue not my sorrow; and saying these words, she began to weepe, and said, My friend, for no good will I tel thee the cause why my cat weepeth: and the young woman said, My good mother,

I pray you that you will tell me the cause wherefore your Cat weepeth. And the old woman said to her, My friend, I will, if thou wilt sweare that thou shalt neuer rehearse it to any body. To the which promise the good and true young Woman accorded her selfe, supposing that it had bene all good, and said, I will. And then the old Woman said to her in this maner, My friend, the same Cat which thou seest yonder, was my daughter, which was wonderfull faire, gracious and chaste, which a young man loued much, and because she refused him, he dyed for loue; wherefore the gods hauing pity on him, haue turned my daughter to this Cat. And the young woman, supposing that her old mother had said truth, said to her in this manner, Alasse my faire mother, I wot not what I shall doe, for such case may well happen to me. For in this towne is a young man which almost dyed for the loue of me. But for the loue of my Husband, to whom I ought to kepe my selfe chaste, I haue not granted to him; neuertheless, I shall doe that that thou shalt counsell me. And the old woman said to her, My friend, haue pitie vpon him so soone as thou maiest, lest it befall to thee as it did to my daughter. The young woman then answered to her, and said, If he require me any more, I shall accord with him, and if he require me no more yet will I profeire my selfe to him, and to the end I offend not the gods, I shall accomplish it as soone as I may. The old woman then tooke leaue of her, and went to the young man, and rehearsed to him all these tidings, whereof his heart was ioyfull, and anon he went to the yong woman, and with her fulfilled his desire. Thus we

may

may see, what euils may be done by bawdes, wherefore I would to God they were all burnt.

The xii. Fable is of a blinde man and his Wife.

THere was sometime a blinde man which had a faire wife, of whom he was iealous, wherefore he kept her so that she might goe no where, for euer he held her by the hand. In the end, she was enamoured of a young youth, but they could not finde the meanes to fulfill their will: notwithstanding the Woman which was subtile and ingenious, counselled her friend that he should come to her house, and that he should enter into the garden, and clime vp into a tree: he did as she bad him, and hauing made their enterprise, the Woman came againe into her house, and said vnto her husband, My friend, I beseech you that you will goe into the garden for to dispost vs a while there. And the blind man was content, and said to his wife, Well my friend, I am content, let vs goe thither: and as they were vnder the Peare tree, she said to her Husband. My friend I pray thee let me goe vp into the tree, and I will gather for vs both some faire Peares. Well my friend said the blind man, doe so: and when she was vpon the tree, shee began to shake the Peare tree at one side, and the young man at the other other side: when the blind man heard the Peare tree shake thus hard, and the noise they made, he said, Ah ill woman, albeit I see thee not, Neuertheless I feele and vnderstand thee, but I heartily beseech the gods to send me my sight againe: and as soone as he had made his pray-

er, Iupiter reſtored to him his ſight. When he ſaw that pageant vpon the tree, he ſaid to her, Ah vnhappy Woman, I ſhall neuer haue ioy with thee. And for that the young woman was ready in ſpeech, and very ſubtill withall, ſhe replyed preſently in this maner, My Friend, thou art beholding to mee for thy ſight, for I neuer ceaſed day nor night to pray vnto the gods, that they would render vnto thee thy ſight; Wherefore the goodeſſe Venus viſibly ſhewed herſelfe to me, and ſaid, That if I would doe ſome pleaſure to the ſaid young man ſhe would reſtore to thee thy ſight: and thus am I the cauſe of it. Then the good man ſaid to her, My right deare wife and good friend, I cry thee mercy, and thanke thee greatly, for thou haſt done right to mee, and I great wrong to thee.

Fable xiii. of the Taylor, the ſteward and his ſeruants.

MAn ought not to doe vnto others, that which he would not haue done vnto himſelfe, as it appeareth by this preſent fable, of a ſteward which had a Taylor, which was a good workeman, as any was in thoſe dayes, which Taylor had many ſeruants, whereof one was called Medius, that ſurmounted all the other in ſhaping or ſowing; wherefore the Steward commanded his ſeruants, that the ſayd taylor ſhould alwayes fare well when they were at his houſe, and eate and drinke of the beſt. It hapned on a day that the Steward gaue vnto them very delicious meate, in which was ſome hony, and becauſe that Medius was not there, the Steward ſaid vnto the reſt, that they ſhould keepe ſome of that meate

meate for him. Then the maſter taylor anſwered, He muſt haue none, for if he were here, he would not eate of it, for he did neuer loue honey. And as they had done, Medius came, and demanded of his fellowes, Why kept ye no part of this meate for me? Then the Steward anſwered, Becauſe that thy maſter ſaid, Thou neuer didſt eate any hony, and therefore no part of the meate was kept for thee. And Medius anſwered neuer a word, but beganne to thinke how he might quite his maſter. Upon a day as Medius was alone, the Steward demanded of him, if he knew no man that could worke ſo well as his maſter? And Medius ſaid nay, and that it was great pittie of a ſickneſſe that he had. Then the Steward demanded what ſickneſſe it was? and Medius anſwered, My Lord, when he is entred into his frenzie or woodneſſe, there commeth vpon him a rage. And how ſhall I know it, ſaid the Steward? Certainly, my Lord, ſaid Medius, When ye ſhall ſée that he ſhall ſit at his worke, and that he ſhall looke here and there, and ſhall ſmite vpon the bord with his fiſt, then may ye know that his ſickneſſe commeth vpon him. And then, without ye take him and binde him, and alſo beate him well, he ſhall doe great harme and damage. And the Steward ſaid to him, Care not therefore, my friend, for well I ſhall beware of him. And the next morning the Steward came to ſee the Maylors. And then Medius, which knew well the cauſe of his comming, tooke away ſecretly his Maſters ſheeres, and hid them, and anon his maſter began to looke for them, & ſearched all about here and there, and ſmote with his fiſt vpon the boord. And then the

Maſter Steward began to looke on his manners, and ſuddainely made him to bee taken and holden by his ſeruants, and after made him to be bound & well beaten. Then was the Maſter Taylor all abaſhed, and demanded of him, My Lord, Wherefore doe you beate me ſo cruelly? What offence haue I done, that I muſt be bound and thus beaten? And then the Steward ſaid to him in this manner, becauſe Medius told me that thou art franticke, and if thou be not well bound and beaten, thou wouldeſt doe great harme. And the maſter came to his ſeruant Medius, and rigorouſly ſaid vnto him, Ha thou bad boy, full of euill words, when ſaweſt thou me mad? And his ſeruant proudly anſwered him, My maſter, When diddeſt thou ſée that I ate no honny? Therefore I threw to thée one bone for another. And the maſter Steward and all his ſeruants began to laugh, & ſaid that he had well done. Wherefore men ought not to doe vnto others, otherwiſe then they would ſhould be done vnto themſelues.

Here followeth the Fables of *Poge* the Florentine.

The firſt Fable, is of the ſubtilty of a woman for to deceiue her husband.

THe falſhood of women is marueilous, as it appeareth by this fable. Of a Merchant that was newly wedded vnto a faire young woman, which Merchant went ouer the Sea to buy and ſell, and for to get maintenance whereby to liue honeſtly: and becauſe that hée ſtayed very long, his

his wife supposed that he was dead, and therfore she enamoured her selfe of another man that did vse her company, and did her much good: for he caused her house to be new built, which had great need of reparation, and much goods also he brought into the same. And a long time after the departing of the said merchant, he came againe to his house, which he saw builded, and saw diuers dishes, pottes, pannes, and such other houshold-stuffe, wherefore he asked of his wife, how she had found the meane to haue repaird so soundly his house? And she answered that it was by the grace of God. And he said, Blessed be God for it. And when he was within the Chamber, he saw the bedde very richly couered, and the walls well hanged, and demanded of his wife as he had done before, and she answered as before. For which he thanked God as he had done before. And as he was set at dinner, there was brought before him vnto his wife, a child of three yeares of age, or thereabout, whereof he demanded of his wife to whom this yonng child belonged: and she said, God of his goodnesse hath sent it me. Then said the Merchant to his wife in this manner, I render no thankes to God for this, for he hath taken too much paine vpon my worke, and I will not that in any wise he meddle any more therewith, for such things belong onely to me, and not to him.

The second Fable, is of the woman and the hypocrite.

The generation or birth of the hypocrite is damnable and euill. As it appeareth by this fable, which

which Poge rehearseth vnto vs, which saith: that sometime he found himselfe in a good fellowship, where he heard a fable rehearsed, the tenno2 whereof followeth; and the said Poge said, That of all the goods of the wo2ld the hypocrites be possesso2s. Fo2 howbeit that an hypocrite hath sometime a will to helpe a poo2e man, yet he hath this commodity in him, that he had rather se a man lie at point of death, then saue his life with a halfe-penny; and his p2esumption is called hypocrisie, as ye shall heare by the fable following, the which saith: that sometime the custome of all the poo2e was, that they went befo2e folkes doo2es without saying any wo2d. It hapned at that time, that a poo2e man, honest and of good life, went to get his liuing from one doo2e to another: and vpon a day among other, he went and set himselfe vpon a great stone befo2e the doo2e of a Widdow, which widdow was accustomed euer to giue somewhat. And when the good woman knew that he was at the doo2e, she b2ought him his po2tion as she was accustomed; and as she gaue to him the meate, she looked on him, and seing him so faire and well made of body, she then filled with carnall concupiscence, and burning in the fire of lone, required & instantly p2ayed him, that he would returne thither within thre dayes, and p2omised to him that she would giue him a right good dinner: and the poo2e man said vnto her that he would: And when hee came againe, hee set himselfe befo2e the doo2e of the Widdowes house, and the woman well knew when hee should come, wherefo2e shee came to the gate & said, Come in, good man, fo2 we shall dine together: whereto the poo2e man

man assented, and entred into the house, and the widdow gaue to him good meate and good drinke. And when they had well dined, the said widdow praised the good man greatly, and after she kissed him, requiring him that she might haue the copy of his loue: and then the poore man all ashamed, knowing her thought and will, answered thus to her: Certainely my good mistresse I dare not, but neuertheleſſe, I would faine doe it. And the Widdow all inflamed with loue, prayed him more and more. And when the poore man saw that he might not excuse himselfe, he said to the widdow in this manner: My friend, sith thou desirest me to doe so great an euill, I take God to my witnesse that thou art causer of it: for I am not consenting to the deed: but saying these words, he yelded to her will.

Fable iii. of the young woman which accused her husband of defect.

POge the Florentine saith, that sometime there was a man named Nerus Depacis, which of his age was among the Florentines right sage and wise. This Nerus had a faire daughter the which hee maried to a faire yong man and a rich, of a good parentage: the which young man, the next day after the feast of the wedding, did leade her into his Castle, a little way without the city of Florence. And within few dayes after, this young man brought his wife againe to Florence, vnto the house of her father Nerus: who made them a feast, as it was accustomed to doe all that time, in some place, eight daies after the wedding. When the new married woman was come againe to her fathers house, she made not ouer-good

chéere,

cheere, but euer she looked downeward to the earth, all sad and melancholious. And when her mother saw her daughter so sorrowfull, and of mourning countenance, she called her into a Chamber, whereas no body was but they two, and asked of her the cause of her sorrow, saying: How fare yee my daughter? What want ye, Haue ye not all things comming to you after your desire? Wherefore take ye such heauinesse? Then the Daughter weeping said vnto her Mother, Alas my mother, Ye haue not marryed me to a man, for of such a thing as a man ought to haue, he hath neuer a deale, sauing a litle part of the thing for which wedding is made. And then the Mother right sorrowfull and wroth of this euill fortune, went to her husband Nerus, and told him of the euill hap of her daughter, whereof he was greatly wroth and sore troubled. And soone after this fortune was told among all the linage of Nerus, whereof they were all sorrowfull, to heare that so faire and comely a young man, endued with so many good gifts and graces, besides riches and renowne, was faulty of the thing for which marriage is made. Neuertherlesse, the tables were set and couered, and when time of dinner came, the young man came into the house of Nerus, with diuers of his friends and his parents, and incontinent they set them all downe at the table, some with heauy and sorrowfull harts, & some with merry mindes and ioyfull countenances. And when the young man saw, that his friends made good cheere, and that all the friends of his wife were heauy and sad, he prayed and besought them, that they would tell him the cause of their heauinesse and sorrow, but

none

none of them all would answer him. Neuertheleſſe, he beſought them againe; and then one of them full of ſorrow, and more forward in ſpech then any the reſt, ſaid, Certainely my faire ſonne, thy Wife hath told vs that thou art no perfect man. At theſe words the yong man began to laugh, and ſaid with an high voyce, that all that were there might vnderſtand him, My Parents and my friends, make good cheere, for the cauſe of your ſorrow ſhall ſoone be appeaſed: and then he being cloathed with a ſhort gowne, vntyed his hoſen, and tooke his member out with his hand, which was great and very ſufficient, and laid the ſame vpon the table, ſo that all the company there preſent might ſee it. Wherefore all the fellowſhip were very toyfull and glad, many of the men wiſhing themſelues the like, and diuers of the women deſiring that their husbands had ſuch an inſtrument. And then ſome of the friends and Parents of Nerus daughter, went to her and ſaid, that ſhe had done great wrong to complaine of her Husband, for he had wherewith ſhe might be well contented, and blamed her great folly. To whom ſhe anſwered in this manner, ſaying, My friends, why blame you me? I complaine not without a cauſe: For our Aſſe which is a brute Beaſt, hath a member as great as mine arme, and my husband which is a man, his member is ſcarce halfe ſo great: wherefore the ſimple and young damſell weend, that men ſhould haue their members as great or greater then Aſſes. Therefore it is oft ſaid, that much lacketh he of that that a fools thinketh or weeneth.

The

The fourth Fable of hunting and hawking.

POge a Florentine rehearseth to vs, how once he was in fellowshippe where men spake of the superfine cure of them which governe the dogs and Hawkes: Whereof a Millanois named Paulus began to laugh, and required of Poge that he would rehearse some fable of the said Hawkes, and for loue of the fellowship hee said in this manner. Sometime there was a Physicion which was a Millanois. This Physicion healed soles of all manner of folly, and in what manner he healed them I shall tell you. This Leech had within his house a great garden, and in the midst of it was a great and deepe pit, which was full of stinking water; and within the said pit the Physicion put the fooles after the quantity of their foolishnesse, some vnto the knee, and other vnto the bellie. And there he bound them to a post, but none he put deeper then vnto the stomacke, for doubt of farther inconuenience. It hapned then that among other, one was brought to him, which he put into the said water vp to the thighes. When hee had beene the space of fifteene dayes within the said water, he began to be peaceable and had his wit againe. And that he might take some disport and consolation, he required his keeper that he might walke about the Garden, promising not to depart thereout. The keeper that kept him, vnbound him from the stake, and had him out of the water. And when he had beene many dayes out of the pit, hee went neere vnto the gate of the Garden, but durst not goe out, lest he should bee put againe within the said pit. Vpon a time he went

vnto

vnto the gate, and as hee looked all about, he saw a faire young man on horsebacke, that bare a Sparhawke on his fist, and had with him a couple of faire Spaniels; whereat the foole was all abashed, and because of nouelty, he called the said yong man, saying, My friend, I pray thee thou wilt tell me what that is thou art set vpon. And the young man said, It is a horse, which doth profit me to chase and beare mee where I please. Then he asked of him, What is that thou beerest on thy fist, and whereto is it good? and the young man answered him, It is a Sparhawke which is good to take Partriches and Quailes. Yet againe did the foole demaund of him, My friend, what are those that doe follow thee, and wherefore are they good? Then the young man answered him, they be Dogs, and are good to search and find Partriches & Quailes; and when they haue raised them, my Sparhawke takes them, whereof proceedeth vnto me great ioy and pleasure. And the foole demanded againe, What profit shall all that they take in the whole yeare bring thee? And the young man said vnto him, Foure or fiue crownes, or therabouts. What, no more, said the foole? And how much shall they dispend thee in a yeere? And the young man answered, Forty or fifty crownes. And, when the foole heard these words, he said againe to the young man, O my friend, I pray thee that soone thou wilt depart from hence, for if our Physicion come, he shall put thee into the same pit, because thou art a foole: I was put in it vp to the thighes, but he will surely put thee therein vp to the chinne: for thou dost commit the greatest folly that euer I heard spoken of.

And

And therefore the ſtudy of hunting and hawking is a ſlothfull cure, and none ought to vſe it without hee were very rich, and a man of lineiyhood, and yet it ought not to be done often, but ſometime for to take diſport, and to driue away melancholy.

The v. Fable is of the recitation of ſome monſters.

POge of Florence reciteth how in his time one named Hugh, Prince of the Medices, ſaw a Cat that had two heads, and his legges before and behind were double, as they had beene ioyned together. Alſo aboue the marches of Italy, within a meddow was ſometime a Cow, which brought forth a Serpent of maruellous greatneſſe, right hideous and fearefull; for firſt he had the head greater then the head of a calfe. Secondly, he had a necke of the length of an Aſſe, and his body made after the likeneſſe of a Dogge, and his taile was wondrous thicke and long without compariſon. And when the Cow ſaw that ſhe had made ſuch a birth, and that within her belly ſhe had borne ſo humble a beaſt, ſhe was very fearefull, and lifted her ſelfe vp, and ſuppoſed to haue fled away; but the Serpent with his long taile enlaced her two hinder legges, and then the Serpent began to ſucke the Cow, & ſucked ſo long till that he found ſowre milke. And as ſoone as the Cow could eſcape from him, ſhe fled vnto the other kine, but incontinent her paps, and her hinder legs, and all that the Serpent touched, was all blacke a great time after. And ſoone after, the ſaid Cow made a faire Calfe, the which marualle was anounched to the ſaid Poge, he being at Ferrara. And yet againe ſoone after that there

there was found in a riuer a monſter mariner of the Sea, of the forme & likeneſſe as followeth. Firſt he had from the nauell vpward the likeneſſe of a man, & from the nauell downward, like the forme or making of a fiſh, the which part was gemine, that is to ſay, double. Secondly he had a great head, and he had great hornes aboue his eares. Alſo he had great paps, and a wonderfull great & horrible mouth, and his handes reached into his intrailes or bowels, and at both his elbowes he had wings right broad and great of fiſhes mailes, wherewith he ſwimmed, and onely he had but the head out of the water. It happened then, that as many women waſhed cloathes at the ſaid riuer, that this horrible and dreadfull Beaſt for default of meat came ſwimming toward the ſaid woman. Of the which he tooke one by the hand, and ſuppoſed to haue drawne her into the water, but ſhe was ſtrong and well aduiſed, & reſiſted the ſaid monſter, and as ſhe defended her ſelfe, ſhe began to cry with a high voyce, Helpe, helpe, whereupon fiue women ranne vnto her, and by hurling of ſtones they ſlew the ſaid monſter. Alſo Poge ſaith, that being at Ferrara, he ſaw the ſaid Monſter, and ſaid, that diuers young children were accuſtomed for to waſh and bathe themſelues in the ſaid riuer, but they came not all home againe, wherefore the women waſhed their clothes no more at the ſaid Port: for the folke ſuppoſed that the Monſter killed and deuoured the young children which were drowned. Alſo, within a little while after it befell about the marches of Italy, that there was a child borne which had two heads, and two viſages, beholding one another,

and the armes of each other embraced the body, the which body from the nauill vpward was ioyned, saue the two heads, and from the nauell downward, the lims were all separated one from another, in such wise, that the lims of generation were shewed manifestly. Of the which childe, tydings came vnto the person of Poge at Rome.

Fable vi. of the Parson, the dogge, and the Bishop.

SIluer causeth all things to be done, vnto the hallowing againe of a place, which is prophane or interdict. As ye shall heare by this present fable, of a Priest dwelling in the countrie, which sometime had a dogge which he loued well, the which Priest was very rich. This dogge by processe of time died, and when he was dead, he buried him in the churchyard, because of the great loue wherewith he loued him. It hapned so, that the Bishop knew hereof of the aduertisment of some other, wherefore he sent for the said Priest, & supposed to haue of him a great sum of gold, or else he would make him to be seuerely punished, and he wrote a letter to the said Priest, of which the tenor contained onely, that he should come and speake with him. And when the Priest had read the letter, he vnderstood well all the cause, and thought in himselfe that he would haue of him some siluer, for he knew well enough the condition of the Bishop: and forthwith he tooke his breuiar & a hundred crownes with him, and went for to speake with his Prelate, and when he came before him, the Prelate

late beganne to shew him the enormity of his misdede: and the Priest answered, Right reuerend Father, if ye knew the soueraigne prouidence wherewith the said dogge was filled, ye would not marueil if hee hath wel deserued to be buried honestly and worshipfully among men: hee was all filled with humane witte, as well in his life, as in the article of his death. And then the Bishop said, How may that be? Rehearse to me then the whole manner of his life. Then the Priest said, Certainely, right reuerend Father, ye ought right well to know, when he was at the article of death, he made his testament, and the dogge knowing your neede and indigence, bequeathed you a hundred crownes of gold: the which I bring now vnto you. And the Bishop for loue of the money assoyled the priest, and also allowed the same sepulture. And therefore Iliust causeth all things to be granted or done.

The vii. Fable, is of the Fox, the Cocke, and the dogges.

All the reward of them that mocke other, is to be mocked themselues, as appeareth by this present fable, of a Cocke which sometime saw a fore come toward him sore hungry; which Cocke supposed that he came toward him but for to eate some of his hens, for which cause the cocke made all his hens to fly vpon a tree. And the fore began to cry toward the Cock good tydings good tydings, and after he saluted the cock right reuerently, and demanded of him thus, O Gossip, what doest thou here so high, and the Hennes with thee? hast thou not heard the good

tydings worthy and profitable for vs? and then the Cocke full of malice answered to him, May verily gossip, but I pray thee tell them vnto vs. Then said the Fox to the Cocke, Certainly gossip, they be the best that euer ye heard, for ye may go and talke and commune among all beasts without any harme or damage, and they shall doe you both pleasure and all seruice to them possible. For thus it is concluded and also confirmed by the great councell of beasts, that none be so hardie, to vere or let in any wise none other, be it neuer so little a beast; for the which good tydings, I pray thee that thou wilt come downe, to the end that we may sing Te Deum laudamus for ioy. But the Cocke knowing well the falsenesse of the Fore, replyed in this manner, Certainely my brother and good friend, thou hast brought vnto me right good tydings, whereof more then a hundred times I thanke thee: and saying these words, the Cocke lift vp his necke & lookt farre from him, and the fore said, What gossip, whereabout lookest thou? And the Cock said, Certainely my Brother, I see a couple of Dogs comming hither with open mouth, which as I suppose, come for to bring vs the tydings thou hast told vs. And then the fox shooke for feare of the dogges, and said to the Cocke, God be with you my friend, it is time that I depart hence before the dogges come neerer: and saying these words, he ran away as fast as he might; and then the Cocke cryed after him, saying: Gossip, why runnest thou thus? if the peace be accorded, thou oughtest to doubt nothing. Ha gossip, said the fore, I doubt that these two dogs haue not heard of the de-

cree

cre of the peace. And thus when a beguiler is beguiled, he receiueth the salarie or paiment which he ought to haue, wherefore let euery man keepe himselfe there-from.

POgius rehearseth, that there were two Women in Rome which he knew, of diuers age & forme, which came to the Curtisan to get somewhat for their bodies; whom he receiued, and it happened, that he knew the fairest of them both twice, and the other once, and so departed. Afterward when they should depart, he gaue to them a piece of cloth, not telling how much each of them should haue for their part: and in parting of the said cloth, there fell betweene the women a strife, because one of them demanded two parts, after the exigence of her worthe, and the other the halfe, each of them shewing their reasons, the one saying, that she had suffered him twice to doe his pleasure, and the other pretended that shee was ready, and in her was no default, and so from brawling they fell to fighting. And their husbands not knowing the cause of their strife, each of them defending his wiues cause; from the fighting of the women, it came to their husbands, with buffets & casting of stones, so long that men ran betweene them, and after the custome of Rome, both the husbands were brought to prison, bearing enmitie each to other, and not knowing wherefore. The said cloth was put into the hands of women secretly, and not parted, but it was secretly argued among the women how it would be parted: and they demanded of Doctors what was the law of it. He saith also that

a Merchant of Florence bought a Horse of a man, and made his covenant with the seller for xv. Ducats, for to pay forthwith in hand v. Ducats, and for the rest he would become his debter: and the seller was content, and thereupon deliuered the horse, and receiued v. Ducats. And a while after, the seller demanded of the buyer the residue. And he denied the payment, and bad him hold his covenant, for, said the buyer, we accorded that I should be thy debter, and if I should satisfy and pay, I should no more be thy debter.

HEe telleth vs also that there was a Carrike of Jene hired into France, for to make warre against the Englishmen, the which Carrike a gentleman of France beheld and saw, and said he would be auenged on him that bare his armes: wherupon arose an alteration, insomuch that the Frenchman prouoked the Genoes to battaile: the Genoes accepted the prouocation, & came at the day assigned into the field, without any array or habiliments of warre, and the Frenchman came well appointed into the field. And then the patron of the Carrike said, Wherefore is it that we two should fight this day & make battaile? Because, said the other, that thine armes be mine, and belonged to me before thou hadst them. Then the Genoes said, It is no need to make any battaile therefore, for the armes that I beare, is not the head of an Ore, but it is the head of a Cow: which thing so spoken, the noble frenchman was abashed, and so departed halfe mocked.

Also

Also he saith, that there was a Phisicion dwelling in a Citie, which was a cunning man in that Science, and had a seruant, a young man, that made pilles, after a certaine forme that he had shewed vnto him: and when this young man had dwelled long with him, & could perfectly make the pilles, he departed from his Master, and went into a strange Countrie where he was not knowne, letting them vnderstand that he was a cunning Phisicion, and could giue Medicines for all kind of diseases, and ministred alwaies his pilles to euery man that came to him for remedy. It happened so, that a poore man of that place where he was, came to him, and complained, how he had lost his Asse, and praied him to giue him a medicine to find his Asse againe; and he gaue vnto him the pills, and bade him to receiue and take them, and he should find his Asse. And the poore man did so, and after went into the fields and pastures to looke after his Asse, and in so doing, the pils wrought so in his belly, that he must nœds go purge him, and went among the rœds, and there eased him, and there anon he found his Asse; whereof he being very ioyfull, ranne into the towne, and declared that by the medicine that he had receiued of the Phisicion, hee had found his Asse. Which thing knowne, all the simple people reputed him a very cunning man, albeit he could doe nothing but make pils. And thus many folkes are oft-times taken for wise and cunning, for he was reputed not onely to heale all kinde of sicknesses, but also to giue medicines to find Asses after they were lost.

THere was in a certaine towne a Widower that wooed a Widow, to haue her to his Wife, & at the last they were agreed and sure together. And when a young woman being seruant with the said Widdow heard thereof, shee came to her Mistresse and said to her, Alas Mistresse, what haue you done? Why said the Mistresse? I haue heard say, said the Maid, That he is a perilous man, for he lay so oft, and knew so much his other wife, that shee died thereof. and I am sorry thereof that you should fall into the like case. To whom the Widdow answered and said: Certainely I desire to die, for heere is nothing but sorrow and care in this world.

This was a courteous excuse of the Widdow.

FINIS.

THE TABLE OF THE LIFE AND PLEASANT FABLES OF Esop, and so forth of *Anian*, *Alfonce*, and Poge the Florentine.

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